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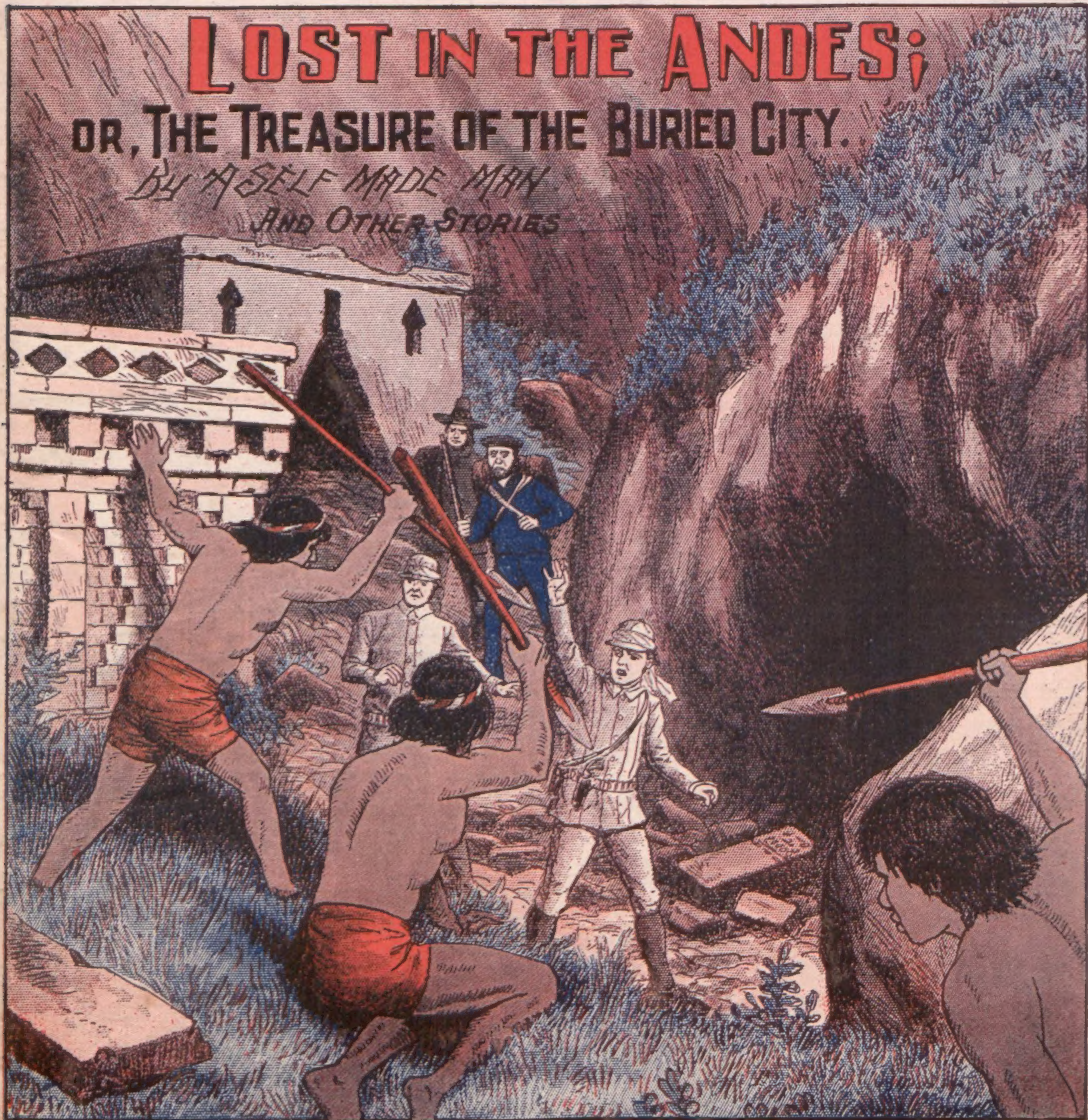
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FAME ^{AND} FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS THAT MAKE MONEY.

LOST IN THE ANDES; OR, THE TREASURE OF THE BURIED CITY.

*BY A SELF MADE MAN
AND OTHER STORIES*



As the two boys, who were in the lead, approached the hole in the mountainside, three fierce-looking natives rose from the ground and barred their way with poised spears.

"Good Gracious!" exclaimed Dudley, instinctively throwing up an arm.

RECEIVED OF THE
SIR JAMES FINCHAM
THE SUM OF
ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY
POUNDS
FOR RENT OF THE
HOUSE NO. 10, ST. JAMES'S
PLACE, LONDON, W.1.

THIS RECEIPT IS VALID FOR THE
PURPOSES OF THE
LAND TAX ACT, 1888.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF
I HAVE SIGNED THIS RECEIPT
AT LONDON, THIS 10TH DAY OF
MAY, 1900.
JAMES FINCHAM
By J. H. FINCHAM
Solicitor for the
lessor.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 17, 1915.

Price 5 Cents.

LOST IN THE ANDES

—OR—

THE TREASURE OF THE BURIED CITY

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

THE ANCIENT MARINER.

"I am the only white man who ever saw the hidden city of the Andes and lives to tell the tale," said the old sailor, wagging his head solemnly.

There was a sad, reminiscent look in the speaker's watery eyes, which seemed to indicate that if he chose to tell all that he knew about his experiences in connection with the city aforesaid he could make his listeners' eyes bulge with wonder.

It was a radiant morning late in the spring.

Frank Dudley and his chum, Arthur Hale, two bright specimens of the progressive American youth, had come to the private wharf of the Dudley property, situated on the banks of the Hudson, not far from the town of Irvington, to fish, and had found the old sailor, with hook and line and basket, seated on the end of a string-piece, apparently in blissful unconsciousness that he was trespassing on private domains.

He was a square-built, grizzly, horny-handed son of Neptune, with a countenance bronzed to the color of mahogany from constant exposure to the sun and wind of every known climate under the sun.

A short briar-wood pipe was stuck between his tobacco-stained lips, and a suspicious-looking, round-bellied bottle reposed by his side.

It was hard to say which was the more highly colored—the point of his large, luminous nose or the bowl of his pipe; both were fine examples in their way, and showed what constant practise will accomplish in the ornamental line.

A pair of particularly bright eyes glowed beneath the rim of a well-worn hat, and he had cocked these upon the two boys as they came upon the wharf.

He had no right on the private dock, and Frank Dudley, when he first saw him, intended to give him a broad hint to that effect; but on second thought he didn't.

They had hardly cast their own lines into the river before the ancient mariner commenced to talk to them.

He said his name was Tom Cox, and wanted to know what theirs was.

They obliged him, though Arthur Hale whispered to his chum that he thought the intruder had a great cheek.

The fish didn't bite very well on this occasion, and the boys would soon have tired of the diversion but for the fact that the old sailor was in a talkative mood and entertained them with a round of astonishing yarns which he emphatically declared were founded on his own personal experiences during fifty years' wanderings about the world.

Finally something reminded him of the city of LaPaz, in Bolivia, and then he told the boys that thirty years before he

had accompanied a party who attempted the ascent of Mount Illimani in the Andes range.

That he had got separated from the bunch, and subsequently losing his footing on the snow-encrusted ground, had slid down the mountainside to an unknown depth without injuring himself in the least.

That while trying to extricate himself from the mountains he only succeeded in making his way further into the range.

That eventually, thousands of feet below the snow line, he had unexpectedly come upon a town, the houses of which were built entirely of pure silver, or some burnished stone resembling that metal.

The town was buried, he said, in a green and fertile valley in the very heart of the Andes range, at no great distance from the elevated city of LaPaz.

The inhabitants he had discovered were descendants of the Incas of Peru.

They had no more knowledge of the outside world than the outside world had of them.

Cox at this point in his yarn made the assertion with which this chapter opens.

"What an old liar this fellow is!" whispered Arthur Hale in his companion's ear.

"It must have been a wonderful town," remarked Frank, with a sober face.

"It was the most wonderful town I ever seen in my life, and I've seen several since I first went to sea," replied Mr. Cox, with equal gravity.

"And you say the houses were built of pure silver?"

"If it wasn't silver, it was something that looked just like it," replied the ancient mariner, nodding his head sagely.

"And were the door-knobs and other little things of that kind made of pure gold?" asked Arthur, with an unbelieving grin.

"No, they weren't," snapped the old sailor. "There weren't no door-knobs, nor no doors, neither."

"Didn't you see any gold at all?" asked Arthur, surprised that the sailor did not include that precious metal in his yarn.

"Sure I did. There was gold cups, and gold ornaments, and all kinds of gold gimeracks."

"And did you bring a few away with you?" went on Arthur, with a sly twinkle in his eye.

"No, I didn't," answered the sailor, shortly.

"I should if I had been in your shoes."

Mr. Cox gave a snort of disgust.

"I was lucky to get away with a whole skin, without thinking about no sich nonsense," he said emphatically.

"How did you manage to make your escape, Mr. Cox?" asked Frank.

"I jest walked out of the valley one mornin', after I'd been there a week, with a bundle of food strapped to my back, and climbed the mountain passes in the direction I thought LaPaz was, and after a week's wanderin' I met a native Injun, who directed me how to find my way to the city."

"I suppose you told all about your adventure when you reached LaPaz?" said Frank.

"I did, of course."

"And what did the people say?"

"They said there was a legend about a silver city buried in the heart of the Andes, but no man had ever been there and come back again."

"But you had been there and come back, hadn't you?"

"Sure I had; but no one would believe me. They said it didn't stand to reason; that Americans had a great imagination, and so on. They didn't exactly call me a liar, but I could tell that they thought I was one."

"It's too bad that you didn't bring back some evidence of the buried city with you," remarked Frank.

"I was lucky to bring myself back."

"And that was thirty years ago?"

The ancient mariner nodded.

"And I s'pose the buried city is there yet?"

"I reckon it is."

"Unless it's been swallowed up by an earthquake."

The old sailor nodded again.

"You say you lived at the place for a week?" said Frank. Another nod from the old man.

"What kind of people were the inhabitants?"

"Sort of copper-colored."

"How did they dress?"

"Most of the men were naked, except for a kind of breechcloth. They wore a band of silver or white metal about their heads, and carried spears when not working in the fields. That was the common herd. The big-bugs wore long gowns of a white cloth, had a gold band around their heads, and wore gold ornaments such as armlets and wristlets, with precious stones stuck into them accordin' to their rank."

"And what about the women?"

"The women folks dressed in white cloth, too. They wore armlets, and wristlets, and head bands, either of gold or silver, accordin' to how important they was. They also wore earrings, and necklaces, and finger rings."

"How were you treated while you were there?"

"Bang up; but I got an idea they meant to burn me up on one of their altars; that's why I made tracks away from the place."

"Burn you up, eh? Why?"

"As a part of their religious rites."

"What kind of worship did they have?"

"Seemed to be a kind of sun worship, as near as I can remember."

"The ancient Peruvians revered the sun as the source of their royal dynasty, didn't they?" put in Hale, looking at his friend.

"I believe they did," replied Frank. "I know I read that their Temple of the Sun, in Pizarro's time, was the most magnificent edifice in the empire. If they had any intention of burning you up as a victim to their god, it's a wonder they let you get away from their clutches."

"I reckon they didn't think I could get away."

"They kept a watch on you, I suppose?"

"If they did, it wasn't a very good one, for when I made up my mind to leave I found no trouble in skiddoo'in'."

"You had to climb up through the mountains to reach LaPaz, which is nearly twelve thousand feet above the level of the sea?" put in Arthur.

The ancient mariner nodded.

"How did you know what direction to go in?"

"I didn't know. Just took my chance."

"You must have had a nice time of it. Supposing you'd gone in the wrong direction; where would you have fetched up at?"

"I reckon I'd died of starvation."

"It's a wonder you didn't organize an expedition to go in search of the silver city. You must have had some idea where it was after having been there."

"Young man, I wasn't a fool," replied the old man, regarding Arthur severely. "Even if I'd been rash enough to want to go huntin' for it, I couldn't have found anybody willin' to go along with me."

At that moment the ancient mariner had a bite, and he drew up a very small specimen of the finny tribe.

The boys laughed at his look of disgust as he removed it from the hook and cast it back into the water.

Evidently he had had enough of fishing, in that particular spot at least, for he coiled up his line, put the round-bellied bottle and small string of fish into his basket, and seemed to be ready to leave the wharf.

The boys also wound up their lines, Frank picking up the half-dozen fish they had jointly secured.

"We'll see you to-morrow, maybe," remarked Frank, as the three walked up the wharf. "I should like to hear more about the silver city."

"All right, young gents," leered the ancient mariner. "I'll be proud and happy to tell you all I kin remember."

They parted from the old man at the head of the dock, and, though they came down next morning at the same hour, and for many mornings thereafter, they never set eyes on the old sailor again, nor could they find any signs of him in the neighborhood, nor find anybody who had noticed him in those parts.

He had vanished as suddenly as he had appeared, and the boys agreed that his advent and departure were as mysterious as was his remarkable narrative of the buried city of the Bo-

CHAPTER II.

THE ABDUCTION.

Frank Dudley and Arthur Hale were both sons of well-to-do residents of the village of Irvington-on-the-Hudson, and they lived close together.

They attended a military school in the neighborhood, as day scholars, and were regarded by the faculty as two of the brightest pupils.

Frank, who was captain of one of the companies, pitcher of the baseball team, and quarter-back and captain of the football eleven, was easily the most popular boy in the academy, while Arthur Hale was a close second.

Mr. George Dudley, Frank's father, was a prominent civil engineer.

He was employed by the Panama Canal Commission, and was at the Isthmus in charge of a certain part of the work then under construction.

It had been arranged that Frank and his friend Arthur were to spend part of their summer vacation at the Isthmus with Mr. Dudley, then go to the town of Panama and take the steamer for San Francisco, returning east by rail.

Frank and his chum were delighted with the prospect before them, and could talk of little else during the remainder of the school term.

The time finally arrived for them to go to New York City and take one of the Pacific Mail Company's steamers for Colon.

The site of Colon is by nature a rank tropical swamp, and most of the houses are built, like prehistoric lake dwellings, on piles sunk into a black swamp.

To the boys, on their arrival, it seemed a most unattractive-looking sport.

Mr. Dudley was on hand to greet them, and he took them to the best hotel in the place, where he stopped himself.

Next day he carried the boys out to the scene of operations on the canal.

Here they saw hundreds of Colombians and Chinamen at work in gangs of fifty or less, in charge of native foremen.

At first the boys were much interested in watching what was going on at this busy hive of industry.

Along the line of the railroad, too, they saw ample evidence of the wreck of the French Panama Canal operations in the fields of abandoned machinery, much of it never put together, and more put together, but never used—the whole invaded by tropical growth, and standing on the edge of the rank swamp through which the track runs.

"I've heard it said that the French company spent three hundred millions in five years," remarked Frank, as he and Arthur were looking at a long row of abandoned dredges in the water. "In my opinion it was the most gigantic case of graft on record."

"I'll bet it was," replied Arthur, with a grin. "If I were a ward politician all this devastation would make me green with envy."

On the third day after their arrival at the Isthmus the boys were introduced to a fine-looking American gentleman named Alfred Seabury, who immediately invited them to spend a week at his place, which was ten miles from the town of Bujio, on the Panama railroad.

Mr. Dudley was well acquainted with Mr. Seabury, and con-

sequently he had no objection to the boys accepting the invitation.

Accordingly, on the following morning, Mr. Seabury, Frank and Arthur took the morning train, which ran through to Panama, forty-five miles from Colon, and, after a brief halt at the station and village of Gatón, on the Chagres River, went on to Bujío, where they alighted from the cars.

A handsome American-made two-seated wagon, with a light cover to ward off the sun's rays, was waiting at the station, with a native driver.

"Get in, boys," said Mr. Seabury. "We've a ten-mile drive before us; but the road is good, and the country much more interesting than what you have just seen along the railroad."

"I'm glad to hear that, sir," replied Frank; "for I've never seen a worse-looking country than that part of the Isthmus we've already been over."

"That's my opinion, too, Mr. Seabury. The village of Gatón, where the train stopped for a few minutes, seems to be made up of rows of plank huts with iron roofs, as like one another as peas in a pod, the only exception being a corrugated iron church in the center."

"You'll find a great improvement on all that out where I live; but you can't expect to find things like they are in the States," replied the gentleman, with a smile.

It took about an hour and a half to reach Mr. Seabury's property, which was situated just within the canal zone of the new State of Panama.

It was a cross between an American high-class farm and a Spanish hacienda.

The house was one of the most pretentious in the neighborhood, and built to conform to the requirements of the climate.

Mrs. Seabury was a handsome woman, a native Colombian, and she welcomed the young visitors in a broken English that fell charmingly from her lips.

The Seaburys had one child, a golden-haired little beauty of ten years, named Bessie—the idol of her parents and the pet of the hacienda.

Frank took a great fancy to her at once, and Bessie appeared to return the feeling with interest.

The boys were shown over the place, and found a great deal to interest them.

The estate had been laid out with an eye to landscape gardening.

Charming arbors were erected at pretty points of view.

Under the shadow of splendid trees they found a brick-lined swimming bath, excavated in the ground, with a little bathing-house built beside it, and a streamlet flowing through—an ideal place for a plunge.

"If the young seniors would like to go in the water they will find bathing dresses in the house," said their conductor, a man by the name of Enrique, who was a kind of majordomo on the estate.

As it was a steaming hot day, the boys eagerly availed themselves of the opportunity, and were soon disporting themselves in the pond.

"I say, this is great," exclaimed Arthur, after taking a header from the spring-board. "You couldn't improve on this anywhere."

"That's right," nodded Frank. "I'll race you to that staging yonder."

"It's a go," cried Arthur. "One, two, three—go!"

Frank won by a head.

They stayed in fifteen minutes, and felt greatly refreshed after their bath.

"We'll have a go at this twice a day while we remain here," said Arthur, as he dressed himself. "I wouldn't miss it for a farm."

"What's the nearest town to this place?" Frank asked Mr. Seabury on the afternoon of the third day of their visit.

"Buga. I'd take you to see it, as it's a typical Colombian town, only for the fact that the country is a bit disturbed over the ceding of this ten-mile strip of territory for canal purposes to the United States under the nominal title of the State of Panama, and the Colombians are a bit hot over it. They've been threatening to resort to arms to recover it, which, of course, would be very foolish on their part. At any rate, they've taken a temporary dislike to Americans on account of the matter, and for that reason I'd rather not take you to Buga."

Bessie was sitting in Frank's lap, with her golden head on his shoulder in a most confiding way.

"Why don't you run and play with your dogs, Bessie?" said her father. "Don't you see them sitting yonder waiting for you to romp with them?"

Bessie, with reluctance, left her new friend, jumped off the wide balcony, and calling to her three pets, who sprang toward her the moment she appeared on the grass, began to make them go through their favorite tricks.

Mr. Seabury and the two boys watched her from their chairs on the balcony.

Bessie was just making one of her canine pets stand on its hind legs, when a bright flash, followed by a puff of white smoke and a loud report, came from a patch of green shrubbery that bordered the lawn.

The child uttered a thrilling scream, and the dog she had been holding up by his front paws fell dead on the ground.

"My heavens!" ejaculated Mr. Seabury, springing to his feet, an example followed by the surprised boys. "What does that mean?"

The three had hardly risen from their chairs, when a hatless, dark-featured man rushed out from the shrubbery and sprang at the little girl as she stood stupefied and dazed, looking down at her dead pet.

He snatched Bessie in his arms and made for the road as fast as his legs could carry him.

CHAPTER III.

AT BAY.

Mr. Seabury, white with excitement and anxiety, dashed after the man, who was carrying away the now screaming child in his arms.

Frank and Arthur followed close at his heels.

They were both staggered by the incident, which they could not understand.

The man and child vanished through the gate, and when the distracted father reached the road he saw the abductor spring with his little prisoner on the back of a horse and gallop off toward Buga at headlong speed.

At that moment Enrique ran up with a shotgun in his hands, which he leveled across the gate at the fleeing rascal.

"You will hit my child," exclaimed Mr. Seabury, staying his hand. "He is bound for Buga, and we must follow him on horseback."

"It is that scoundrel, Carlo Serrogog, whom you turned away last week for theft," almost howled the old servant, with whom Bessie was a great favorite. "He shot at the child, missing her and killing the dog; and then, to make sure of his revenge, he has carried her off with him. He is a bad man. I will get horses while you get your revolvers. We will catch him before he reaches the town, and I will kill him as I would a—"

"Yes, yes!" interrupted Mr. Seabury, half frantic over his loss. "We will follow him at once. Quick, Enrique, bring the horses and let us be off!"

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Frank, as the owner of the place and his sturdy old servant hurried away. "This is tough on Mr. Seabury."

"Bet your life it is," replied Arthur.

"I feel like taking a hand in this myself," said his chum. "I can't bear the idea of that little girl being at the mercy of such a ruffian. I'm afraid he'll get clear off while they're getting ready to pursue him."

"I don't see what we can do in the matter. We can't run after him on foot."

"No," replied Frank, with flashing eye and bated breath, "we can't, that's true. If we only had a pair of horses."

"Or a bicycle apiece," supplemented Arthur.

The words were hardly out of their mouths before a couple of horsemen dashed around a turn in the road leading from Bujío and presently drew up before the boys.

"Is Senor Seabury at home?" inquired one of the riders in English.

"Yes, sir," replied Frank. Then he added quickly: "We'll take your horses."

The gentlemen dismounted and started to walk up the driveway.

"Now is our chance," said Frank to Arthur, in a tense tone. "We can't stand on ceremony. Every moment counts. Mount the other horse and we'll start after that rascal Serrogog, if we have to follow him all the way to Buga, where Mr. Seabury believes he is bound."

"All right, Frank," replied Arthur, promptly. "I'm with you."

In their enthusiasm the boys forgot that the abductor of little Bessie was armed with a revolver; but even if they

had recollected it we doubt if that fact would have deterred them from making this effort to rescue the little girl.

The boys leaped on the animals, and digging their heels into their flanks, started them at a hot pace on the road to Buga.

The boys had covered perhaps six miles of the distance to Buga, when, as they rounded an elevated turn in the road, Frank, who was a dozen lengths in advance, caught sight of Serrogog in the distance, with the child seated in front of him on the horse's neck.

Serrogog disappeared around a distant bend in the road, his animal giving signs of distress.

Frank lashed his horse with the bridle-reins and bent low over his neck.

The beast responded with a fresh burst of speed, and the boy soon reached the turn around which the abductor had vanished.

He was just in time to see the villain dismount in front of a roadside house and, with Bessie in his arms, lead the animal through a gate.

Frank at once reined in and waited for Arthur to come up.

"Stop," he cried, grabbing at his chum's arm.

"What's the matter?" asked Arthur, pulling in.

"We must go slow now," said Frank. "The fellow has stopped at yonder house and gone into the yard. Draw up alongside the hedge here and we'll consider what we had better do."

"I thought he was going on to Buga," said Arthur, following the example of his companion, who had dismounted.

"His horse has given out," replied Frank, "and he has taken refuge in that house. No doubt he is known there, and it won't do for us to run into a hornet's nest. It's growing dark fast. We'll wait here for a while and watch the road to see he doesn't make a new start with a fresh horse. Mr. Seabury and old Enrique ought to be along presently. Then the four of us can storm the building together."

So they waited, giving their mounts a needed breathing spell.

Thus fifteen minutes passed away, and still there was no sign of Mr. Seabury and his faithful old servant.

"They ought to be here by this time," said Frank. "I don't think we could have got over ten minutes' start of them."

Another five minutes passed, and still there was no sound of horses' feet in the road behind them.

"Maybe they've taken a short-cut to Buga," suggested Arthur.

"I don't think there is such a thing, for if there was, surely Serrogog would have taken it himself. He ought to know the country as well as any one."

"That's right," answered Arthur; "he ought."

It was now as dark as it ever would be that night, and the boys had walked their horses close up to the roadside house.

They could see a light shining from a second-story window, and also lights on the ground floor.

"Well, what are we going to do?" asked Arthur, at length.

"You hold my horse," replied Frank. "I am going forward to investigate."

Then he pushed his way through the hedge and disappeared.

He made his way cautiously to the rear of the house, where there were no lights, and tried one of the doors.

It opened at his touch, and he entered the place as softly as he could.

The building was only a two-story affair, like many of the houses in tropical countries, where earthquakes are a common occurrence.

The lower floor seemed to consist of a public drinking room in front, and a kitchen and other living apartments behind.

The sleeping-rooms were above where Frank was aiming for.

He opened the first door he came to and found the room untenanted.

He then tried the next room, and was disappointed to see no sign of Bessie.

A third room, overlooking the back yard, was next tried.

A cheap kind of lamp burned dimly on a plain wooden table.

As Frank's eyes roved around the room his heart gave a great bound, for there, stretched upon a bed, lay Bessie, apparently unconscious.

"Now to carry her away without the people in the house getting wind of my movements," thought the plucky boy, as he closed the door behind him and crept to the bed.

A Mauser rifle stood near a chest of drawers close by, and Frank seized and cocked it, ready for an emergency.

Then he shook Bessie softly, holding his hand above her mouth to stifle any frightened cry she might utter at being aroused.

She made no movement, however, and the boy looked at her in some alarm.

He bent down and found that she was breathing heavily.

He shook her harder than before, but she acted like a person under the influence of some drug.

"The villain has stupefied her in some manner," he thought, raising the girl in his arms.

Her head fell limp and lifeless upon his shoulder.

At that moment he thought he heard sounds in the hallway below.

Fearing that his retreat was cut off, he turned to the window, opened it and looked out.

It was only a short jump to the ground below, but the question was, could he do it without injuring Bessie?

While he was considering the matter the door of the room was thrown open and Serrogog entered.

He took in the situation at a glance, and his surprise for the moment held him spellbound to the spot.

That momentary inaction on his part was all that saved Frank's life.

With an oath, and some inquiry in Spanish, unintelligible to Frank, he drew his revolver and raised it to fire.

But the boy had comprehended his danger in the twinkling of an eye and, dropping Bessie on the bed, had grabbed up the rifle.

Serrogog, with an oath of rage, pulled the trigger of his weapon, and a loud report rang through the house, startling its other inmates.

The bullet hummed past Frank's ear.

The boy, seeing that his life was in grave peril, for the rascal was cocking his revolver for a second shot, raised the rifle quickly and fired, with scarcely any aim.

Serrogog clapped his hand to his breast, spun half around, with a terrible cry, and fell headlong to the floor.

At that thrilling moment two fierce-looking men appeared at the open doorway.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RESCUE IN PANAMA BAY.

Frank, now full of fight from his toes up, covered the two men with the rifle.

"Throw up your hands!" he roared in a tone of voice that showed he meant business.

The two men made no effort to comply with the command, as they did not understand a word he had said.

They did understand, however, that they were in danger of being shot, and both made a jump to get out of range.

They collided and went sprawling on the floor as Frank fired at them without effect.

At that moment the front door was burst in downstairs, with a crash that rang through the building and raised screams from a couple of women.

"I hope that's Mr. Seabury and Enrique, with Arthur," breathed Frank, rushing toward the door and covering the men, who had tried ineffectually to make their escape from the room.

"Frank! Frank!" came ringing up to him from below in his chum's well-known tones.

"Hello, Art!" he roared back through the open door. "I'm upstairs."

Immediately there were hurried steps on the stairs, and presently Enrique, followed by Mr. Seabury, Arthur and the two gentlemen whom the boys had deprived of their horses in so summary a manner, appeared at the entrance to the room.

Enrique pounced upon the fallen rascals, while Mr. Seabury sprang into the room.

"My Bessie?" he ejaculated feverishly.

"She is safe," replied Frank, pointing to the bed.

"Thank heaven!" cried the gentleman fervently, rushing up to the bed and raising the child in his arms. "Bessie, darling, speak to me. Speak to papa!"

But it was out of her power to do so, for she had been drugged.

"Great heavens!" cried Mr. Seabury, in agony. "What can be the matter with her?"

The other two gentlemen stepped forward at that moment, and one of them, after looking at Bessie, said she had evidently been stupefied with some preparations to keep her quiet.

"The infernal rascal!" cried the excited father. "To do such a thing to my poor child! Where is the scoundrel?"

"I had to shoot him to save my life, sir," spoke up Frank, pointing at the motionless figure of the abductor, as he laid near the door with cocked revolver still clutched in his right hand.

"You did right, young man," said Mr. Seabury. "Is he dead?"

"No," replied one of the gentlemen, who was kneeling by his side, with his hand over the rascal's heart. "He is not dead, but he is badly wounded. The rifle ball passed entirely through his body. It will require the opinion of a surgeon to pass upon his chances of recovery."

"Such villains are better underground," said Bessie's father. "You are a plucky lad, Frank Dudley."

As a matter of fact, Serrogog did recover in the end, though he had a narrow squeak for his life.

He lay for weeks on his bed, and when well enough he was put in jail, duly tried for his crime, convicted, and passed many years of his life in a Colombian prison at hard labor—a fate he richly deserved.

A week later the boys, having tired of Colon and the Panama Canal, took the train for the town of Panama, on the Pacific side of the Isthmus.

This place has some of the dignity and picturesqueness of an old Spanish city, and the boys found it a decided improvement over Colon.

They had a week to wait before they could get a steamer for San Francisco, but they did not think time would hang very heavy on their hands during that interval, for there was a good deal to interest them in the place.

On the second day of their stay the boys hired a small American-built sailboat and went out on the bay.

Frank was an expert boatman, and Arthur was almost his equal, so that they did not hesitate to take this sail in strange waters.

They shaped their course for a pretty, wooded island about a mile and a half off the town.

"Here comes a sailboat around yonder point of the island," said Arthur, pointing the craft out to his companion.

"I see it. Whoever is handling her seems to be a pretty rocky navigator," answered Frank, watching the wobbly gyrations of the boat.

"She'll be over in a brace of shakes if that chap doesn't look out," said Art, presently.

The words were hardly out of his mouth before the catastrophe happened.

The sailboat heeled over on her beam ends and spilled her passengers—a dark-skinned native and a white boy—into the bay.

"We must pick them up," said Frank, steering the boat in the direction of the two unfortunates.

The native swam lustily toward the partly overturned craft, and soon succeeded in climbing up on her hull and supporting himself by the guy rope that held the mast taut.

The boy was not so fortunate.

While still a dozen yards away the boy weakened and sank out of sight.

"He's gone," cried Arthur, excitedly.

"Oh, he'll be up in a moment. Grab that boathook and stand ready to hook onto him when he comes to the surface."

Arthur snatched up the boathook and gazed eagerly out over the waves.

"There he is now," exclaimed Frank, pointing, at the same time moving the tiller a bit to port.

The boy was sinking for the second time, when Hale inserted the hook under the collar of his jacket and drew him a foot out of the water.

With Frank's assistance Arthur hauled the almost unconscious boy into the boat and laid him face down in the cockpit, while Frank headed for the overturned craft to take off the other victim of the disaster.

The boy they had rescued presently showed signs of recovery.

He turned over on his back and then sat up, rubbing the water out of his eyes.

"How do you feel?" asked Arthur, at last.

"I feel rather shaky," replied the boy. "I'm awfully obliged to you chaps. You've saved my life. I held out as long as I could, but I'm not much of a swimmer. If it hadn't been that you came to my aid I should surely have been drowned."

"We're mighty glad we reached you in time. It would have been hard luck if you had been lost."

"It would have been rough on my governor if I had been drowned. He lost mother a year ago, and I'm the only one he's got left. My name is Fred Leslie. What's your name?"

"My name is Arthur Hale, and this is my chum, Frank Dudley."

"Glad to know you both. You are Americans, are you not?"

"We are. We live at Irvington-on-the-Hudson, in New York State, when we're at home. And you?"

"I'm English," young Leslie replied. "My father is the Hon. Edward Leslie, M. P. We are on the way to LaPaz, Bolivia, to do the mountains."

"You don't say!" answered Arthur.

Their conversation was interrupted by Frank calling on his friend to lend a hand to help the native Colombian out of his unpleasant predicament.

In a few moments the man was safe aboard the sailboat, and Frank, bringing their craft about on the other tack, headed for shore.

CHAPTER V.

OFF FOR BOLIVIA.

"Who was steering the boat when she upset?" asked Frank.

"I was," replied Leslie, looking a bit sheepish. "I thought I knew the ropes well enough, but I guess I'm not as good a sailor as I thought I was. You seem to understand how to manage this craft all right," he added, admiringly.

"Art and I know enough to keep a boat right side up in most any kind of blow short of a hurricane. We live close to the water, and we spend a good part of our time on the Hudson. By the way, I think you said you were going down to Bolivia?"

"Yes," replied Fred Leslie.

"I wish we were going along with you, instead of back to the United States on the next steamer."

"I'd like to have you chaps go along first-rate. Maybe it could be arranged. My governor will be glad to take you after what you've done for me this morning. Where are you lodged?"

"Art and I are stopping at the Panama House."

"Not alone?" asked the boy, in some surprise.

"Yes. My father is one of the engineers of the Canal Commission. We came down to the Isthmus to take a look around. We're now on our way to San Francisco."

"Your father down here, too?" asked Leslie, turning to Hale.

"No. My father is in New York. He's a civil engineer, too, and partner of Frank's father."

"Any special reason why you should get back home right away?" asked their new friend.

"Oh, no. We've got about eight weeks' vacation yet ahead of us. We expect to stop a week or two in San Francisco before we start East."

"Well, if there's no reason why you have to get home under two months, you might just as well come to Bolivia with the governor and me. It would be real jolly, don't you know, the three of us. We're only going to remain a short time in the neighborhood of LaPaz. The governor is quite an expert mountain climber. He's been up the Matterhorn, in Switzerland, and on some of the tallest peaks in the Alps. He's anxious to make the ascent of Illimani and, if he has time, Sorata."

"Do you mean to say that you and your father have come all the way from England en route to Bolivia just to climb a certain mountain?" asked Frank.

"Yes. And to see Lake Titicaca, and to go up the corkscrew railway, as I call it. I shall enjoy the trip ever so much better if you chaps will only come along. It shan't cost you a penny, either. I say, now, you'll promise to come if the thing can be fixed up with your governor, won't you?" asked the young Englishman, eagerly.

"I'm not so certain that it can be arranged," replied Frank. "If it could be, I'm with you, and so is Art here. If your father made a personal visit on my father and put the matter squarely before him, saying that he'd look after us, the matter might be brought about. Otherwise there's not much chance of it."

"My governor will do that to oblige me, and also because he will be glad to have you in the party. You may depend he'll be very grateful to you both for saving my life."

"Don't say any more about that, Leslie," said Frank. "We

couldn't do less for you than what we did. We should have done the same for any one under the circumstances." The boat shot up alongside of the landing, and the boys, as well as the native Colombian, landed.

"Come with me to our hotel," said Leslie, taking both of his new friends by their arms. "I want to introduce you to my governor right away."

They found the Hon. Mr. Leslie, who was a fine specimen of an athletic English gentleman, in the rotunda of the hotel, reading a British newspaper.

Fred introduced his new friends to him, and the gentleman expressed the pleasure he felt at making their acquaintance.

When Fred told him that the boys had saved his life in the bay a short time previous, Mr. Leslie began to regard the bright young American lads in quite a new light.

He expressed his grateful appreciation of the service they had rendered his son, and hoped they should know each other better.

Fred soon introduced the subject nearest to his heart—that his new friends should go with them to LaPaz, in Bolivia, instead of returning immediately to the United States, according to their present program.

Mr. Leslie said he would be very happy to include them in his party, and that the little trip shouldn't cost them a penny.

"We should like to go to South America very much, sir," said Frank; "but, of course, we couldn't think of doing so without my father's permission."

Mr. Leslie promised to use his influence in persuading Mr. Dudley to give his consent to Frank and Arthur making the journey to Bolivia.

Mr. Dudley, however, much to Frank's and Arthur's delight, gave his consent, and so one July morning the party left Panama on the steamer Peru, bound down the South American coast.

About three hundred miles south of Guayaquil the steamer came to anchor in the roadstead of Payta, in Peru, a dead-and-alive place, built of bamboo huts.

A few days later Mr. Leslie and the boys landed at Callao just in time to catch the evening train for Lima.

"To-morrow you'll have the greatest experience you ever had in your life," said Fred, as the boys took chairs on the hotel portico after dinner.

"What's that?" asked Frank and Arthur simultaneously.

"We're going to make the ascent to the crest of the Andes by the Oroya Railway, which, starting from sea-level, takes you in nine hours to an altitude somewhat higher than that of the summit of Mont Blanc."

"That will be something to talk about when we get home, Art," remarked Frank.

Mr. Leslie and the boys boarded the train at an early hour next morning, and the train pulled out of town by a valley leading inland and began to climb the mountain range.

Late in the afternoon, after traversing many corkscrew tunnels, spider-legged bridges and narrow ravines, they arrived at the summit, fourteen thousand feet above the level of the sea, where they were treated to a magnificent expanse of snow-covered mountain scenery that amply repaid them for the inconveniences attending the trip.

Two days later they were aboard the steamer again, sailing southward.

Sixteen days after leaving Panama the vessel anchored in Mollendo.

The passengers and baggage were taken ashore in barges through a narrow opening in the reef.

In the morning Mr. Leslie and the boys took a train for the interior.

At sunset they reached Arequipa station, where they had to wait four days for the weekly train which goes up to Lake Titicaca.

Starting early in the morning, they arrived at Puno about dark, and boarded a little steamer for the trip across the lake, which is the largest in South America.

At eight o'clock on the following evening the steamer anchored off the Bolivian port of Chichilaya.

"What kind of four-wheeled contrivance do you call that?" asked Arthur, pointing to a covered wagon drawn by four mules, when they disembarked next morning.

"That," replied Fred, "is the tilbury I told you about in Panama."

"Do we ride in one of them?" asked Frank.

"We ride to LaPaz in that very one. My governor telegraphed for it to meet us here."

"It looks like my idea of a wild western shake-down," grinned Arthur.

"It will never hold together if we've got any rough traveling to do," said Frank, casting a doubtful glance at the old rig, the harness of which was no less antique than the wagon itself, and was patched in numberless places with pieces of cord.

"It will hold together better than you think," replied Fred. "Tumble aboard, for here comes my governor."

With much shouting and cracking of his whip the driver got the team in motion, and off they went at a brisk pace.

"They ought to have a sprinkling-cart on this road," grumbled Arthur. "It's simply the worst ever."

"Yes, it's pretty bad," admitted Fred.

"And I've never had such a bumping in my life as I'm getting in this wagon."

"You mustn't mind that, Art," laughed Frank. "Just be thankful you're alive."

"How much more is there of this sort of thing?" asked Arthur, at length, as the team, at reduced speed, made its way up a long, gentle slope that hid all view ahead.

Fred appealed to his father for information, and Mr. Leslie spoke to the driver.

"LaPaz is right ahead over the rise in the valley below," was the substance of the man's response.

Suddenly the two leading mules disappeared over the edge of the rise and turned sharply to the left.

As the wagon followed them the party found themselves without warning on the edge of a cliff which dropped some sixteen hundred feet to a great basin, that looked like the crater of some enormous volcano—a basin ten miles or so in diameter, with a valley stretching upward to the mountains, and another stretching downward to a remote distance.

"There's LaPaz now," shouted Fred, in some excitement, and his companions gazed downward to see a great red-roofed city spread out before them, while twenty-five miles away rose the glorious, isolated, snow mass of Illimani—the mountain the Hon. Mr. Leslie had come all the way from England to climb.

The road down was well laid out in zigzags, down which the tilbury galloped at a fine pace, and in a short time the party entered the outskirts of the town.

CHAPTER VI.

RELICS OF THE PERUVIAN INCAS.

LaPaz from above looks flat; when you get among its streets it is difficult to stand on the steeply inclined pavements.

The tilbury entered the town at what the boy thought to be a reckless pace.

"If an automobile cut up shines like this in a New York street there'd be something doing mighty soon," said Frank. "It's a wonder our wheels don't fly into disconnected spokes."

After swirling around one corner after another, a final dash brought the covered wagon into the great square of the town, and the team drew up before the Hotel LaPaz.

The party was soon installed in excellent rooms, well furnished and thoroughly European in aspect.

Next morning Mr. Leslie and the boys were laid up with the siccche, or mountain sickness, caused by the altitude they had reached.

In twenty-four hours they were as well as ever again.

Then Mr. Leslie began his preparations for the ascent of Mount Illimani, while the boys amused themselves by taking in the town.

"What shall we do with ourselves, fellows?" asked Arthur, with a yawn.

"I know what we might do, now that we're our own masters for a few days," said Frank, with a grin; "that is, if you chaps have any sand."

"Well, what might we do?" asked Arthur.

"We might go down the valley and have a hunt for the buried city of the Andes."

"The buried city of the Andes!" exclaimed Fred, in some surprise.

"Oh, you're joking, aren't you?" replied Arthur to his chum. "You don't mean to say that you take any stock in that yarn? Why, that old sailor was the rankest liar I ever listened to."

"What are you chaps talking about?" inquired Fred, curiously.

"We met an old sailor one morning fishing from the wharf on Frank's father's property, and he told us some stories about his experiences around the world that would have made

Ananias, if he was alive, look like thirty cents. Among others, he said that he was right here in LaPaz thirty years ago; that he started up the Illimani Mountain with a party of climbers; that he got separated from the party, lost his footing in a cravasse, I guess it was, and fetched up several thousand feet below the snow-line; that he tried to find his way out of the range, but got deeper in, and then the first thing he knew he discovered in a small valley a town built either of pure silver or some stone that looked like it, inhabited by the descendants of the Peruvian Incas. He told us how the people dressed, and a lot of other rot about them. Finally he managed to make his escape back to LaPaz. He said he was the first white man who ever saw the hidden city of the Andes and lived to tell the tale. Now what do you think of that?"

"I think it very strange," replied Fred, thoughtfully.

"Strange!" exclaimed Arthur. "I don't see anything strange about it. The old rascal made the yarn up as he went along. I have often wondered what he took us for. I never thought Frank or I looked like a pair of chumps."

"I have a reason for saying I think it strange," said Fred, quietly. "A week before the governor and I left England I bought a book about the Andes at a second-hand store. I was eager to read up all I could on the subject, as I expected soon to see those wonderful mountains with my own eyes."

"Well?" said Frank, with a look of interest.

"The book contained quite a good deal about the Incas of Peru. You know how Pizarro conquered that country and made the Inca race subject to Spain?"

"Sure. I've read all about it," replied Frank.

"When Pizarro entered Peru he found the country occupied by two rival factions—the adherents of Huascar, the real heir to the crown, and the followers of Atahualpa, his half-brother. Pizarro, for reasons, sided with the latter and helped him whip Huascar. This prince was taken prisoner and put to death. His adherents and some of his family fled the country. History is silent as to where they went, though it was believed Bolivia was their destination. At any rate, this book said there is a legend that the descendants of Huascar settled in the wilds of the Bolivian Andes and founded the Silver City, which, however, no white man has ever seen, or, if any have, they never returned to civilization to tell the story of what the city was like."

"That legend seems to tally with the story told by the old sailor to Art and me, doesn't it?"

"It certainly does," replied Fred. "That's why I said it looked strange to me. Can it be possible that such a city really exists in the heart of these mountains?"

They talked the matter over until lunch hour, and were about as wise on the subject as when they started.

That afternoon they visited an old monastery on the outskirts of the town.

One of the fathers showed them about the institution.

The most interesting part of the old building was the museum.

This contained a great many specimens of native handiwork of early days.

There were also a number of unique and valuable ornaments fashioned out of pure silver, some of which were incrustated with precious stones.

One was a silver head band, with a large topaz as a centerpiece.

Then there were several armlets and bracelets—the former heavy bands of pure silver, perfectly plain; the latter two inches in width, and brilliant with small diamonds in great profusion.

The boys wanted to know if these were relics of the Peruvian Incas.

The priest nodded.

"How long have they been in this monastery?" asked Frank.

"More than one hundred years," replied the monk.

"They put me in mind of the description of the ornaments which Tom Cox said were worn by the inhabitants of the buried city of the Andes," remarked Frank, turning toward his companions.

The monk pricked up his ears and turned a strange look on the boy.

"What do you know about this buried city?" he asked, almost eagerly.

"I'll tell you if you want to hear the story."

The priest expressed a desire to listen to it, whereupon Frank narrated the alleged experiences of the ancient mariner in the Bolivian Andes thirty years before.

"There is a legend that a community of Incas, driven from Peru at the time of the conquest of that country by Pizarro, took refuge in a small valley in the heart of these Cordilleras," replied the monk, solemnly. "Efforts were made two hundred years ago, and at rare intervals since up to the early part of the nineteenth century, to determine the truth or falsity of the legend, but nothing ever came of it. Two of our monks made the attempt one hundred and sixteen years ago. They failed of their object, but they found those armlets and bracelets and head band in an underground cavern far down in the range. Their supplies giving out, they were obliged to return, which they only succeeded in doing after a great deal of difficulty and almost incredible suffering. Nothing could induce them to renew the search. Since then other monks have gone in search of this phantom buried city, and have never returned. Many of the inhabitants of LaPaz in times past have organized expeditions for the same purpose, but not one man of them all has ever come back to relate his experiences. The sailor from whom you heard the story which you have just related to me was probably gifted with a rare imagination and a good memory. It seems likely that he visited LaPaz at some time in his life, heard the legend of the Silver City, as it is called; came to this monastery like any of our visitors and saw these relics; and then, recalling the incidents of his sojourn here, when in your company put the story together, with such embellishments as a ready brain could contrive on the spur of the moment."

"Then you don't believe there is any real foundation in fact for the legend of the buried city of the Andes?" said Frank, disappointedly.

"Who shall say?" replied the monk, shrugging his shoulders.

And that was all they could get out of him, though the boys each made him a liberal donation, ostensibly for the good of the monastery.

CHAPTER VII.

IN THE WILDS OF THE ANDES.

The sight of the relics of the Peruvian Incas, brought by the two monks more than a hundred years before from the very depths of the Bolivian Andes, as well as the little the monk had said about the legend of the Silver City, fired the imaginations of the three boys.

Finally they decided to make a trip to the Convent of the Black Brotherhood, which was a two days' trip into the heart of the Andes, and see if they could learn anything there about the Silver City.

They spoke to the proprietor of the hotel, an Englishman, about it.

He said he would furnish them with an Indian guide, also a native Bolivian to carry such supplies as they would need.

The boys were enthusiastic over the expedition, and, knowing they had no time to lose, every arrangement was made for an early start on the following morning.

Each of the party was provided with a stout mule, and quite a few spectators around the square watched them mount their animals and start off in the cold morning air along the cobble-stoned street.

In a few minutes the town was left behind, and the road passed through a short, deep cutting, which had doubtless been worn down by ages of traffic.

The course they were now pursuing took them away from evidences of civilization, and they gradually penetrated into the wilds of the Andes, every mile seeming to carry them lower down.

The valley gradually narrowed to an immense gorge, where steep cliffs approached one another from both sides, and the scenery became wilder than ever.

"In twenty-four hours from now we ought to reach the Convent of the Black Brotherhood," said Frank. "That is as far from the mountains as our guide will take us."

"Perhaps the Black Brotherhood can tell us something more about the legend of the Silver City than we've learned so far," said Fred.

"If they know anything I'll bet they won't give it away," said Arthur.

Frank asked their guide, who could speak fair English, if the Convent of the Black Brotherhood was often visited by people from LaPaz.

"Not often," he replied. "It is a tiresome thirty-six-hour trip to get there, and few care to attempt it."

"What kind of a looking place is it?"

"A long, rambling building, built on the edge of an unfathomable precipice."

"It must be a nice spot to live."

The guide shrugged his shoulders and went on eating in silence.

"How would you like to spend the rest of your days in a place like this?" asked Frank of his companions, who had been listening.

"Excuse me," replied Arthur, "I prefer civilization."

"Do these monks ever go up to LaPaz?" Frank asked the guide.

The man shook his head.

"They live and finally die out in this solitude."

"Yes," replied the man.

"Why are they called the Black Brotherhood?"

"They dress in black gowns, with black hoods over their heads. They never speak once they enter the four walls of the convent."

"They must be a sociable set, upon my word," snickered Arthur.

"They use signs, I suppose," said Frank. "What is their object in living so far down the range, and out of the track of life?"

"Fasting and prayer."

"I should judge they stood a good deal of fasting, all right," grinned Arthur, "for I haven't seen any evidences of fertile ground for two hours."

"They live wholly on vegetables and fruit, which they grow in the neighborhood," said the guide.

"That's a healthy diet, at any rate," remarked Arthur. "I suppose they live to a good age, most of them. No one lives to be old in LaPaz, for it is twelve thousand feet above the sea."

"They must have a pretty good-sized cemetery there, then. We'll have to take it in, fellows, when we get back."

They rested half an hour after finishing their meal, and then, remounting their mules, proceeded on down the mountain.

They traveled at a fair speed along a narrow, beaten track until darkness came upon them, catching them in a dreary-looking defile, where they started a fire and cooked a pot of coffee.

The air was quite chilly, but nothing like as cold as at LaPaz.

After supper all hands wrapped themselves up in their ponchos and gradually dropped off to sleep.

Soon after sunrise breakfast was served, and then the journey toward the Convent of the Black Brotherhood was continued.

The scenery now was of the wildest, and in some respects grandest, to be met with in that section of the range.

As noon was coming on they suddenly emerged into a wide, amphitheater-like space, somewhat resembling one of the small Colorado canyons.

Their path led them around the face of the wall, along a path scarcely more than two feet wide, and it gave the boys a touch of the horrors to look down the sheer sides of the precipice, anywhere from fifteen hundred to twenty-five hundred feet deep.

"Gee! I don't like this for a copper cent," quavered Arthur, the perspiration oozing out on his hands and forehead through nervousness. "Suppose this mule of mine were to slip and go over? If I dared dismount, I'd get off and walk."

There was not much chance of dismounting after they had got started, like flies, upon their trip around the amphitheater.

As for the mules, they didn't seem to mind it at all.

They were sure-footed, and there was not one chance in a hundred that they would slip.

The boys shut their eyes and trusted to luck and their four-footed carriers.

At last they reached the opposite defile in safety, and there drew a breath of great relief.

"I suppose we've got to return by the same road," said Arthur, with a kind of shudder. "That's the fiercest proposition I've ever been up against. I'd rather go through a long, dark tunnel any day."

"This will be something to tell about when we get home," said Frank, with a shaky sort of laugh.

"That was the finest sight I ever saw in my life," said Fred; "though I'm bound to say that I kept my eyes closed the greater part of the time. I only looked down three times during the trip, and it gave me the shivers each time."

"I should think that it would. I tried it once, and that was enough for me. I didn't dare try it again for fear I should fall off the mule's back," said Frank.

"Say, talk about something else, will you?" put in Arthur. "I'll bet I'll have a nightmare to-night over that spot."

They took their lunch beside a small waterfall in a romantic pass, and then resumed their journey.

As the shades of evening were falling upon the mountains they came to another series of giant precipices, down the side of which they slowly pushed their way.

"Yonder is the Convent of the Black Brotherhood," said the guide to Frank, pointing to a low, rambling building perched upon the summit of a straggling rock below them.

The boys looked with a great deal of curiosity at the place where they were going to pass the night.

The crags of the Andes rose all around them, except at one point not far from the convent wall, when they broke away into a small green valley that was under cultivation.

At last they reached the outer gate of the convent, a kind of lodge, at which the guide rapped loudly.

Presently a face appeared at the wicket, then the gate swung open on great solid hinges, just as if they were expected, and the boys found themselves within the walls of the Convent of the Black Brotherhood.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MONASTERY OF THE BLACK BROTHERHOOD.

The monk who admitted them was dressed in a coarse black gown, held at the waist by a piece of rope which had been dyed black, and his head and face were concealed within the folds of a black hood.

He pulled a dangling rope that hung from the ceiling of the lodge, and a bell rang out three times on the still night air.

It was the signal that strangers had arrived to partake of the hospitality of the brotherhood for the night.

Presently two other monks, similarly attired, made their appearance, and each grasping the leading rope of a mule, led them into a courtyard, the boys and the two men following.

Not a word so far had been spoken, and the lads themselves were silent, under the impression that all conversation was barred, though such was not the case with respect to outsiders.

The visitors were led first to a lavatory, where they washed up, and then were conducted into a reception-room, where they were left alone.

It was a plain, rather cheerless-looking apartment, lighted by two narrow slits of windows placed out of reach.

The only illumination after dark was a swinging bronze lamp full of some kind of oil, on which a small taper floated.

As may be supposed, it gave out but a dull light, leaving the corner of the room in the grasp of the shadows.

"This is a queer old place, isn't it?" whispered Arthur. "Puts one in mind of an old dungeon."

"It does that," replied Frank, in a low tone.

At that moment a tall, bony monk walked into the room as silently as a shadow and paused before them.

The guide, who was no stranger to the convent and its people, explained, in Spanish, not a word of which the boys understood, that the three lads had come from LaPaz to visit the convent and pass the night there.

The superior nodded and left the room as he came.

"What a ghostly-looking chap that was," said Arthur. "Is he the boss of the place?"

The guide said he was, and added that they would presently be conducted to the refectory or eating-hall.

In a short time another black-robed monk appeared and made a sign for them to follow him.

He led them to a room with a low ceiling of rafters only, the furniture of which consisted of a long table surrounded with three-legged stools.

At one end five plates were spread, with knives and forks, cups, saucers and spoons, all of the plainest description.

The visitors took their places at the table and were waited on by another monk.

When the party had ate all they wished, another monk appeared and led them to the bell tower, whence they had a view in the moonlight of the great black void on the edge of which the building stood.

"I shouldn't want to drop down into that awful depth," remarked Fred, as he hung over the wooden parapet.

"I should say not," replied Arthur.

Then they looked up and around at the wild, precipitous crags of the great Andes standing out in bold relief in the moonshine, or lost in the deepest of shadows.

Each of the visitors was shown to a separate, cage-like room, fitted with a small iron bedstead and a three-legged stool.

The novelty of the situation kept Frank awake for some time.

Every quarter of an hour a bell clanged softly somewhere out in the courtyard.

Following the fourth quarter the hour was tolled.

Frank heard the bell twice, then he fell into a dreamless sleep, from which he awoke to find the sun shining through the slit of a window that opened above the precipice.

He dressed himself and made his way to the lavatory, where he found Arthur before him.

The guide and the other man soon appeared.

There were no signs, however, of Fred.

A monk soon appeared and ushered them into the refectory again, where their breakfast awaited them.

"Hello!" remarked Arthur, "there are only four plates. Where's Fred's?"

Frank called the attention of the guide to this circumstance. He spoke to the attendant monk.

The recluse produced a pad and pencil and wrote something in Spanish, which the guide translated to the boys.

"Your companion had his breakfast two hours ago."

"Two hours ago!" exclaimed Frank, in surprise.

"And went outside the convent."

"Oh, all right," answered Frank. "He's stuck on the scenery around here, I guess, and rose early to take a good look at it."

"Do you want to go out in the fields?" asked the guide, after breakfast.

The two boys said yes, so the guide led the way out into the little valley, where a dozen of the monks were working.

Their hoods were thrown back on their shoulders, so that the boys got a good view of their rugged though solemn faces.

After spending half an hour in the fields, Frank, Arthur and the guide returned to the convent, expecting to find Fred waiting for them.

There was no sign of him, however.

"I wonder where he went?" said Frank.

He asked the guide to make inquiries.

The man found a monk who had seen Fred take the path down the mountain about two hours before.

"Where does that lead to?" asked Frank.

"To the foot of these precipices," answered the guide. "No one goes down there—at least, not very far. He'll be back in a little while."

So the two boys hung around the monastery gate, waiting for Fred to return, but an hour passed and he was still absent.

"Some accident may have happened to him," said Frank, anxiously. "We ought to go down the path after him."

"I'll send Sancho down," said the guide.

Sancho was the man who looked after the supplies.

He was instructed and sent down the precipice pathway.

Dinner-time came and Sancho had not come back with information about Fred.

"I'm almost sure something has happened to him," Frank said to Arthur. "He wouldn't remain away in this fashion if he could help himself."

After the monks had had their dinner, a place was made for the two boys and the guide, and the meal was served to them.

Hardly had they finished their dinner before Sancho made his appearance.

He reported that he had not seen Fred, but had found a paper attached to a tree a thousand feet below.

It had writing on it, in pencil, which he could not understand, and he had brought it back with him.

To the boys' surprise, it proved to be a communication from Fred, as follows:

"Am following a strange clue that seems to point to the Silver City. If I don't return by noon, and you find this, follow me through tunnel below.

"FRED."

CHAPTER IX.

THE CLUE.

"We've simply got to follow him," said Frank, after reading the paper out aloud to Arthur. "It's more than an hour past noon now."

"I'd give something to know what kind of a clue he's found," replied his chum.

"The only way to find out is to tag after him."

"That's what we'll do. Put it up to our guide."

Frank explained to the man that they had decided to follow their companion down the cliff.

The guide, however, objected strenuously.

He said it was a perilous undertaking to any one not accustomed to mountain climbing, and there was nothing to see that warranted the risk.

"But Mr. Leslie's son has gone down there, and he wrote on that paper that he wants us to follow him through a tunnel to some point he did not specify."

The guide shook his head, and said that he'd send Sancho on again, after he had had his dinner, with instructions to bring Fred Leslie back.

This did not satisfy the boys, excited as they were over Fred's intimation that he had found a clue to the buried city.

They insisted that all four should go on until they overtook their companion.

A good deal of argument on the subject ensued, but Frank was firm in his demand, and in the end the guide reluctantly yielded.

He insisted that the scheme was foolish, and that the risk must be on their own heads.

"All right," replied Frank. "The risk shall be ours. We don't propose to let Fred get into any trouble if we can help it."

Half an hour afterward, preceded by the guide and followed by Sancho, with a bundle of provisions on his back, Frank and Arthur started down the narrow pathway which wound around the giant cliffs.

They soon found, as the guide had warned them, that the journey was full of danger, particularly to persons inexperienced in such kind of traveling.

But the two boys possessed their full share of American pluck and endurance, and they were not going to be outshone by an English lad, who showed nerve enough to lead the way alone.

Their path was beset with small rocks and huge boulders, and often encumbered with shrub-like growths just coming into leaf.

The descent finally led down to a gulley, where Sancho pointed out the tree on which the paper had been secured.

"There is a tunnel below here," said Frank. "Fred wrote that we should follow him into that."

The guide shrugged his shoulders, and they went on till they came out into a broad slope, which stretched steeply down into the heart of the range, narrowing as it went.

To descend further in a straight line without ropes and mountain pikes was practically out of the question, and the guide called their attention to that fact.

"That tunnel must be somewhere around here, then," said Frank. "for Fred never went down there."

The boys hunted among the bushes for it, while the men, who seemed to have no interest in this expedition, sat on a rock and conversed together in Spanish.

No doubt the reckless conduct of the boys was the subject of their remarks.

Frank suddenly came upon a smooth place on the rocks.

He gazed at it in surprise, for it was covered with strange hieroglyphics surrounding a pictured representation of the sun.

An arrow head pointed into a cleft into the rocks.

"Come here, Art," he called excitedly. "I guess this is the clue Fred referred to in the paper."

Of course, neither Frank nor Arthur could make head or tail out of the inscription, but the meaning of the arrow-head seemed plain enough.

"Here's a paper stuck against the rock," said Arthur, eagerly grasping it.

It contained the following words in pencil:

"To Frank and Arthur: I am going to see where this tunnel leads to, and then return to the monastery, unless you meet me on the way. The sun inscription on the face

of the rock outside was certainly made by Peruvians of the Inca variety. It may have been cut out two or three hundred years ago, but to my eye its distinctness points to a much later origin. The arrow-head pointing into the cleft evidently is significant of something. I believe more than ever in the actual existence of an Inca town buried in the depths of this range. If we can find it, and then be able to return to civilization, it will make us famous.

"FRED."

"I wonder if we are really on the right track to Silver City," said Arthur, eagerly, as they entered the cleft and, striking a match, found that they were in a tunnel that led gently downward.

"Then you are beginning to think that the ancient mariner was not such a liar, after all?" laughed Frank.

"I am not willing to admit that he actually went to the buried city, as he asserted," replied his chum. "He could have picked up enough material in LaPaz to manufacture a yarn out of. The fact that he probably sprung a fake story on us that morning does not disprove the theory that the buried city really does exist somewhere in this range."

"That's true; but, still, it's funny that nobody in this progressive age has seen fit to follow the legend up."

"I'll bet lots of people have tried it, but gave up on account of the many perils they had to face."

"Danger only incites the right kind of person to greater effort."

"Admitting that it does, not one person in a hundred venturing this way would have discovered those hieroglyphics and the arrow pointing into this tunnel. They would have turned back after seeing the impossibility of descending the slope except with the help of a long rope. Even if they were provided with every facility for getting down the gully, they would only be going the wrong way, if there is anything in the arrow-head."

"The arrow is plainly intended as a guide to some place," said Frank, "else it wouldn't be cut in this rock. Whether its meaning is of any use at this late day is quite another question."

"Well, let's get a move on," said Arthur, impatiently. "We ought to have torches to explore this tunnel."

"They would be a great advantage," admitted Frank; "for there's no telling what pitfalls might spring up in our path. But I'm afraid we'll have to get along without them."

Frank returned to the spot where the guide and Sancho sat in the sunshine.

The boy explained that he had found the tunnel, down which he was satisfied their companion had gone, and that he and Arthur were ready to proceed.

The guide and his companion followed Frank to the cleft in the rocks and looked in.

"You say he go in here?" asked the man, with a doubtful expression on his face. "How you know that?"

"We found this paper here," said Frank. "Fred wrote it and left it here for us to find when we came this way."

It was evident enough that neither of the men cared to continue on through the tunnel.

If Fred Leslie had been foolish enough to venture in there, the guide reasoned that he stood a small chance of coming out again.

Frank pointed the arrow out to him, arguing that that was a good sign that the tunnel led to some definite end, but the guide was not convinced of the fact.

He advised the boys to give up further search for their companion and turn back to the monastery.

"Not on your life, we won't," replied the boy, sturdily. "We're going to find Fred first. We wouldn't shake him in that fashion. We're not built that way."

The guide didn't understand the English slang expressions used by Frank in his impetuous way, but he did understand that the boys were determined on entering the tunnel.

He turned to Sancho and they talked the matter over for a quarter of an hour before the latter reluctantly agreed to accompany the boys.

"We must have torches," said the guide.

"Where are we going to get such things?" asked Frank.

"We make," replied the man.

Four long torches were put together by Sancho and soaked in a resinous gum produced by a tree growing on the mountainside.

Lighting these, the party entered the tunnel.

CHAPTER X.

THE UNDERGROUND PASSAGE.

The tunnel had evidently once upon a time, probably ages ago, been an underground waterway.

In no other way could its existence be accounted for.

The guide walked in advance, swinging his torch aloft; the two boys followed at his heels, and Sancho brought up in the rear of the procession.

The tunnel maintained a uniform height of eight feet and a width of six as they advanced down the slope.

They could see nothing ahead of them at any time but intense blackness.

"We appear to be going down into the bowels of the earth," said Frank. "I don't see how Fred had the nerve to come all this way by himself in the dark."

"He's got good backbone, all right," said Arthur, in some admiration. "If I had been in his shoes I should have returned to the monastery to get the rest of the party to accompany me."

"If he had come back that would have been the end of the enterprise."

"Why would it?"

"Because Manuel, our guide, would never have consented to come down this way on a purely exploring expedition."

"Not if we had promised to pay him extra?"

"I don't think so. It is only because he knows Fred's father is a person of some considerable importance in England, and has been received in LaPaz by all the chief functionaries, that he is reluctantly putting himself out to search for the boy. He is afraid to return to LaPaz and report Fred lost in the mountains. He understands that a certain responsibility attaches to him as our conductor."

"Suppose that we don't find Fred at the end of this tunnel; what do you suppose Manuel will do?"

"I have no idea what he will do. He is a very uncertain proposition."

"If he refuses to go any further, what are we going to do about it?"

"I can't say what we will do until the time comes. I hope to find Fred waiting for us at the far outlet of this underground passage. He would be very foolish to venture into any situation that would make it a difficult matter for us to find him. It's mighty easy to lose oneself in these mountains."

"I'll bet it is. It seems to be plain sailing so far. Even without our guide we could easily find our way back to the monastery from this point."

"That's because we followed a straight path down the cliffs, and we can't very well go astray in this tunnel, so far as I have seen."

"I suppose that's the way Fred figured the matter; but I should think he'd have thought of his stomach. He ought to be hungry by this time, and there isn't any chance of his finding anything to relieve his hunger down here."

"He relies on us to fetch something along."

"That's all right; but it was reckless of him to depend on those papers he put up as guides to his progress and intentions. A wind might have come up and blown them away."

"It's my opinion he merely came down the precipice for the novelty of the thing, for he left no word of his intentions at the monastery. He clearly expected to return long before dinner-time; but when he ran across that inscription on the face of the rock, with its Inca representation of the sun, and saw the arrow-head pointing into the tunnel, his head, already filled with thoughts of the Silver City, got excited over the situation, and he recklessly started to explore this tunnel alone. I am satisfied he has pondered more over this buried city of the Andes than we ever have ourselves. I'll bet he has implicit faith in its existence."

"It would take an awful lot of faith to get me to come down here by my lonesomeness," replied Arthur.

"Fred is an enthusiastic chap. When he gets an idea in his head he follows it out to the limit."

"I call this tunnel the limit," said Arthur. "There doesn't seem to be any end to it. We must have walked a mile already."

"We've come some distance, that's a fact."

"Who knows but we may fetch up in China?" grinned Arthur.

"We might keep on until we reach the foot of the range."

"Down near sea-level, eh? That would give us a twelve-thousand-foot climb to get back to LaPaz again—no fool of a job."

"Over two English miles."

The tunnel now swung around suddenly to the left and expanded into an immense rotunda, the roof of which was lost in the obscurity above.

Here they saw evidences that man had occupied the place for some purpose not apparent to their eyes.

The solid rock had been cut out in great pillars at one end of the room, if it might be called such, while in a central spot midway between the pillars stood an immense flat rock, which showed that it had been fashioned into its shape by rude implements of some kind.

Upon its widest side, facing the length and breadth of the room, was a clear representation of an immense sun, rays flashing away from it in every direction.

The stone had been cut away behind to make a platform, four feet lower, and this was reached by a series of wide steps.

Manuel, the guide, and his companion, Sancho, were clearly astonished at what they saw, and jabbered together in Spanish.

"Well, what do you think now, Art?" asked Frank. "Here is more evidence of Inca civilization. I shouldn't be surprised if we were somewhere on the outskirts of the buried city."

"It begins to look like it," replied Arthur. "It has the appearance of either a public gathering place or a temple of religious worship."

"That's what. I should think Fred would have halted here to await our appearance, but there is no sign of him. This is a long distance from the monastery."

"I should remark, I'm getting kind of peckish myself, and would a good dinner before we started on this trip."

After seeing all they wanted to see, and becoming conscious that their torches would not last much longer, the guide was for retracing their steps and giving Fred up for lost.

But Frank would not stand for such a proposition.

To turn back would be to desert their companion, who had gone ahead with the utmost confidence that his friends would surely follow to rejoin him ultimately.

"We've gone too far to turn back now. We're only half a day's march from the monastery, anyway, and we've provisions enough to see us through for several days. I'm going to see this thing out. If you fellows don't want to proceed further, let us have the provisions and you can go back."

That was Frank's ultimatum to the guide, and Manuel was afraid to desert them, lest the consequences descend on his own head.

So they hunted around till they found the continuation of the tunnel, now much larger than before, and they continued on into the obscurity, the descent being now noticeably steeper.

The course of the tunnel was now tortuous, or corkscrew fashion.

For half an hour they kept on, until the last torch dropped to the ground, leaving them in total darkness; then, for fear of an unexpected pitfall, they began feeling their way along the wall.

Ten minutes more of this kind of traveling, and then the tunnel seemed to grow less dark.

"Our eyes are getting used to the gloom," said Frank.

"Yes, we're drawing near an opening," replied Arthur.

The words were scarcely out of his mouth before they came to an abrupt turn in the tunnel, and they saw a glimmering of light a hundred yards ahead.

They hastened their steps, and, reaching that point where the tunnel turned again, they saw the opening and the light of day streaming into it.

"Hurray!" shouted Arthur. "We have reached the end of this underground passage at last."

All hands made a simultaneous rush for the open air.

They now found themselves in the face of a narrow valley literally covered with green foliage, while high above their heads rose the rocky sides of the mountain range, till its numerous peaks and crags seemed lost in the blue ether of the sky.

All hands sat down for a needed rest, for they were now aware for the first time that they were fatigued by their long journey through the tunnel.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BURIED CITY.

"It's clear that we're a long way down the range," said Frank, glancing around the spot. "The air feels warm and dense. There's a great difference between this locality and LaPaz."

"Well, I should sneaker," grinned Arthur.

"The important question which now presents itself is, where is Fred?"

"That's so. Where is he?"

As far as the four could see there was not the sign of a human being in that vicinity.

He has led us a long and anxious chase," went on Frank, "and I think it is high time that he let up on us."

"I think so myself," replied Arthur. "If we leave the mouth of the tunnel we stand a first-class chance of missing him altogether."

"Oh, we can go a little way up this valley," said Frank, "without missing him if he is here, for it's too narrow and open to pass any one unobserved."

"We can't stay here long and expect to do anything, for it will soon be dark," answered Arthur. "I move we have a bite of our provender and then move on."

This suggestion was acted on.

Sancho unstrapped his pack and distributed a certain quantity of provisions among the four, which they washed down with cool water from a wicker-covered bottle he had brought along.

Rested and refreshed, the party started on once again, with the boys in the lead.

After advancing perhaps a fifth of a mile the valley swung abruptly to the right, and then the party was treated to a genuine surprise.

Right before them stood a solid-looking one-story building that had evidently once been white, but it was now stained and discolored by exposure to the weather of numberless years.

It possessed several narrow, unprotected openings that served as windows, and a wide doorway without any sign of a door.

The general color of the building was that of tarnished silver.

At right angles to it was another building, of similar size, but of odd design.

Diamond-shaped and square panels of a dark stone were set into the whiter rock at regular intervals down to a level with the top of the doorway, while the rest of the structure was put together with a burnished brick, which gave it a silvery effect in such places as had escaped the worst of the weather.

Both buildings were without any sign of life.

"The Silver City!" mechanically escaped the lips of both boys, as they stood and gazed almost open-mouthed at the two houses.

The guide and Sancho also uttered exclamations in Spanish.

Whether or not these buildings were a part of the legendary buried city was not yet certain, but the impression produced on the boys was that they were.

The silvery gloss was plain enough in spots to prove that when new they must have closely resembled that precious metal.

"We must be on the outskirts of the town proper," said Frank, in a voice quivering with excitement. "The next turn in the valley may take our breath away."

After feasting their eyes on the two houses, the boys advanced again, but this time with some caution, for, though the valley was as silent as the grave, and apparently as tenantless as a desert, they could not tell what awaited them further on.

Right before them was a verdure-clad elevation, and they were advancing to mount it, when Arthur suddenly called his companion's attention to a tunnel-like opening in the mountainside on their left.

"Let's see what that is, Frank," said Arthur. "It looks as though it was something more than a natural opening in the rock."

As the two boys, who were in the lead, approached the hole in the mountainside, three fierce-looking natives rose from the ground and barred their way with poised spears.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Dudley, instinctively throwing up his arm.

"By the great hornspoon!" ejaculated Arthur Hale, stopping short, aghast.

Then both boys clapped their hands to their hip-pockets, where they carried the seven-shooters they had brought with them from New York.

But they did not draw them, for at that moment, with a chorus of shrill cries, half a hundred of nearly naked natives rushed out of the opening and surrounded the boys, the guide and the man Sancho.

With cries of triumph and exultation the four prisoners were hustled forward up the green embankment and around a jutting cliff, where they caught their first view of the buried city of the Andes—the Silver City of the descendants of the ancient Incas of Peru.

Even in the gathering dusk the strage town presented an impressive effect.

It consisted of perhaps a hundred or more one-story houses, each erected in the center of a square plot of ground of emerald greenness, and each as like its neighbor as one pea to another.

All were built of some stone whose burnished whiteness would have dazzled the unaccustomed eye in the sunshine.

They were lined up with mathematical precision, with a walk composed of fine white sand from the single doorway to the broad, straight street.

These streets crossed one another like the squares of a checker-board.

Exactly in the center of the town was one building of unusual size and height, as compared with the others, and, instead of a flat roof, was furnished with a great dome, which shone with a weird luster.

At regular intervals all around the four sides of this central building were enormous white columns capped with a ball of glistening metal, similar in luster to the dome itself.

Viewed from above and at a distance, the whole town looked like a collection of dazzling white model houses set down with great exactitude upon a brilliantly green carpet, with a wide border all around it of emerald-tinted foliage.

As the prisoners viewed it from a slight elevation, and close at hand, it presented a truly remarkable picture, and Frank and Arthur did not for a moment doubt that they were actually gazing on the Silver City of the ancient mariner's yarn.

But the circumstances surrounding their introduction to it were not of a nature to make them feel particularly happy.

There was a sinister purport in the hostile attitude of the natives that caused a chill of apprehension as to their future to course up and down their spines.

They were prisoners of a strange people, whose habits and customs were probably totally at variance with the rest of the world. A people to whom civilized usages were doubtless unknown, as they themselves were unknown to civilization.

In their present situation they were practically dead to the world.

After taking in the wonderful picture as a whole, the boys turned their attention toward the one prominent edifice, in the center of the town, toward which it appeared they were being hurried by the triumphant squad of natives who surrounded them and cut off all hope of escape, if any such thing was in their minds.

That this was a place of worship seemed reasonable to suppose from the number of white-robed people who at that moment were either entering it through its wide-open portals between columns of shimmering metal, or wending their way toward it along every street, and also because of a white smoke which rose through an opening in the roof, as if from an altar fire.

To further confirm such a belief, the faint sound of sweet music arose in the air from the interior of the building, mingled with the sonorous chanting of many voices.

CHAPTER XII.

WORSHIP OF THE SETTING SUN.

When the crowd of natives with their prisoners reached the foot of the main street, which led directly up to the portals of the central building, they came to a pause, and their cries ceased like magic.

It seemed as though an invisible wall led them back at the very portals of the Silver City.

All but the eight who held the arms of the prisoners, and stood immovable like so many graven images, prostrated themselves in the shrubbery in attitudes of reverence.

The two boys stood almost together on the very edge of the creamy white pavement and watched the white-robed inhabitants of the Silver City walking singly and in groups up the wide steps of the dome-crowned edifice.

They seemed to be a higher order of people from the dark-skinned, athletic and lightly-clad men who had captured the visitors to the valley.

But the boys were not near enough to form any idea of their personality.

There seemed to be no doubt, however, that the prisoners would shortly be brought face to face with those who were in authority over the buried city.

At last every white-robed man and woman had entered the building, which the boys afterward learned was the Temple of the Sun, and a stillness like that of death fell upon the valley for several minutes.

Then, as if from a preconcerted signal, a paean of praise rose from the throat of every person within the temple.

While the glow of the setting sun lingered upon the snow-clad peak of far-away Illimani the chant continued.

As it died away into a purple tint the weird song subsided in intensity.

At length the light faded entirely away from the glacier, and then silence fell once more upon the temple and valley alike.

A dense white vapor ascended heavenward through openings in the dome, and the still evening air became loaded with a sweet-smelling incense.

Once more rose the sweet chorus of young girls mingled with the chant of the priests.

As the cadence rose and fell, like the swelling and receding notes of some great organ in a vast church, the boys seemed to forget their unusual and ticklish surroundings in the wonderful impressiveness of the invisible service they were listening to.

One girlish soprano voice soared above all the others, of unparalleled sweetness and power, every note as clear as a silver bell, and as Frank listened to it his emotional nature was stirred to its very depths, while his eyes grew humid and moist.

That voice maintained its supremacy to the last, dropping in exact proportion as the chorus and chant dropped, and its last liquid note trembled on the air and vibrated through the valley on the wings of the silence which succeeded.

Then the white-robed people issued in a stream from the temple, but instead of dispersing they gathered in a mass in the immediate vicinity of the building.

A score, perhaps, of white-clad girls next came out, but instead of descending the steps, as the others had done, they spread themselves out along the portico.

A white-haired man made his appearance with a measured stride.

An immense ruby, surrounded by a glittering array of almost priceless diamonds, flashed from the center of the diadem which encircled his venerable brow.

His bare arms were ornamented with a pair of massive circlets of solid beaten gold.

Similar bands, but not so heavy, surrounded his wrists, and these were thickly studded with jewels.

Over a white attire similar to that worn by the other people was a sort of vestment on which was emblazoned in brilliant tints the figure of the sun, with rays projecting from it in every direction.

This figure, astonishing as it may seem, was fashioned entirely of topaz and rubies, and was a wonderful piece of handiwork.

Following on the heels of the old man came six men of varying ages, all dressed exactly like the priest, but in much less impressive way, and in a descending scale to correspond with their rank.

The rank and file of the inhabitants bowed their heads in token of respect for these exalted personages as they passed out of the temple and finally paused on the lowest step.

The prisoners and their native conductors could barely see this ceremony from where they stood, owing to the gathering darkness and the distance which intervened.

At some signal from the high priest a score of boys sprang out of the temple with flashing torches and took their places in certain elevated positions, the glare of their lights throwing a weird radiance upon the scene.

A second signal came from the priest, and a dozen strong-limbed young men came forward and bowed one knee before him.

The priest issued some command to them.

Instantly they rose, turned around and marched in a body rapidly down the main street toward the spot where the natives and their prisoners were drawn up in silent array.

They halted on the inner edge of the pavement while one of their number, a handsome lad of perhaps eighteen, whose brow was encircled with a narrow golden band without ornament, while his companions wore silver ones, advanced and addressed the natives in a tone strange to the prisoners' ears, but musical and pleasing.

A stalwart native advanced a foot and replied in a language somewhat similar, though harsher in tone.

While talking he pointed to the prisoners, and seemed to be giving an account of how they had appeared in the valley.

When he had concluded and fallen back among his fellows, the young man advanced and looked closely at each of the prisoners.

His gaze rested longest on the handsome, manly countenance of Frank Dudley, who met his look unflinchingly, like the fearless lad he was.

The young man finally tapped Frank on the breast and motioned to him to come forward.

His attitude seemed almost friendly, and the boy obeyed.

Then in turn he tapped Arthur, Manuel, the guide, and, last of all, the sullen-faced Sancho, and ordered them in pantomime to fall in behind Frank in single file, which they did, Manuel and Sancho most unwillingly.

At a signal the other young men closed in around them, and then the party started up the white paved street toward the portal of the temple, where the high priest stood, with his assistants around him in a semicircle, the girls on the steps behind, with one of their number, a young virgin of surpassing loveliness, whose jeweled diadem flashed in the light of the torches, a step in advance.

As the prisoners came within the glow cast by the torches they had a good view of the congregated inhabitants of the Silver City.

In color they were many degrees lighter than the native population of the valley, who appeared to be slaves or serfs of the better class.

Their attire was composed of spotless white robes, without sleeves, gathered at the waist by a stiff cloth girdle of the same color.

The only difference between the male and female dress was that the latter was longer, reaching quite to the ankles, and more voluminous in its folds, while it was much lower in the neck.

The men wore plain silver armlets and wristbands; the women jeweled ones.

Each wore a silver band around the forehead, without ornamentation.

This was the costume of the majority.

There were others whose head bands, armlets and bracelets were ornamented with precious stones in keeping with their rank in the community.

This select body stood on the right hand of the high priest and his assistants.

The prisoners were lined up before the high priest for inspection, as it were.

He looked at each critically, his gaze dwelling longer on Frank and Arthur than on Manuel and Sancho.

Finally he addressed himself to Dudley in a rich and musical tone.

Frank understood not a word he said.

Nevertheless, he replied in good English, though convinced that his words would be equally unintelligible to the priest.

The religious head of the Silver City listened attentively, and then motioned Frank aside, speaking some words to the handsome young man, who at once placed himself beside his prisoner.

The high priest then spoke to Arthur, and, having listened to his reply, assigned another of the young men to take charge of him.

Manuel, the guide, now came in for his share of attention. His reply was in Spanish, and a frown gathered upon the brow of the priest.

When Sancho also answered in Spanish, the frown became deeper.

The high priest issued some orders to the other young

men, and then turned close about the guide and his associate and

marched them off down the street to where the natives were still waiting.

Manuel and Sancho were turned over to them, and the whole crowd set off with their two prisoners, shrieking, and talking, and gesticulating violently.

The high priest now made a signal, and the inhabitants began to melt away in groups to their several homes.

The girls, with the single exception of the beautiful one in advance, disappeared into the temple.

The high priest, followed by his assistants, moved in solemn procession up to one of the sections of the building.

There the six priests parted from the high priest, who entered the edifice, and, returning in a body, entered the other side sections of the temple building.

All the torch-bearers but one vanished; he accompanied the beautiful girl down to where Frank and Arthur stood beside the two young men.

Her glance rested a moment on Frank's face, and the boy thought her the loveliest girl he had ever seen in his life.

That was also Arthur's opinion.

Preceded by the torch-bearer, she walked to the house on the eastern side of the temple and entered it.

The handsome young man indicated to Frank in friendly pantomime that he was to accompany him.

He led the way to the same house, and soon Dudley stood within the portals of one of the buildings of the Silver City, while at the same moment Arthur Hale was introduced by the other young man to one of the dwellings close by.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TEMPLE AND TREASURE

Frank soon had evidence that he was not to be treated like a prisoner, and he felt exceedingly gratified and relieved.

He found himself in a large, square room, furnished with stone seats and lounges, equipped with soft stuffed coverings.

It was the main or reception-room of the house.

Doors covered with a white flowing drapery led to other rooms beyond.

The roof was open to the air, being divided in four sections by stone cross-pieces supported by a central column that was highly polished till it shone like burnished silver.

A circular stone table surrounded this column, and here the meals of the household were served twice a day.

Frank subsequently discovered that the general furnishings of the house were on a much more comfortable scale than he had had any idea of at first.

The handsome young man, whose name he subsequently discovered was Rollo, tried to impress the fact upon him in pantomime that he was to make himself at home.

Frank appeared to grasp his meaning, and smiled gratefully.

By the young man's orders a meal was specially prepared for him by a native girl, for the family dinner was over two hours before.

It was served on silver plates, and, whatever it was composed of, it proved quite palatable to the boy.

When he had finished, and the dishes had been taken away, the beautiful young girl, whom Frank subsequently found out was the young man's sister, appeared with an odd kind of stringed instrument, and she sang and played in a manner so ravishing as to quite astonish our young hero.

He recognized her voice as the soprano which had led in the service in the temple at sunset, though on this occasion she sang so low that the sound did not penetrate to any great distance.

Both brother and sister acted in an exceedingly friendly manner toward their visitor, though, of course, all their communication with him had to be carried on in pantomime.

At nine o'clock Frank was shown to an inner room, also open to the sky, where he found a comfortable lounge, on which he rested through the night.

Next morning he breakfasted with the brother and sister, and thereby understood that their parents were probably dead, and they the sole occupants of the house.

After the meal he sat for an hour with the girl, whose name was Alma, each trying to make themselves understood by the other.

They met with poor success, but the girl seemed to take great delight out of the tete-a-tete, laughing musically at their blunders, and at the same time casting many an admiring glance at the handsome young American.

By and by Rollo reappeared and motioned Frank to follow him.

When the boy took up his hat, Alma took it from him and examined it closely, with exclamations of surprise.

She put it on her own shapely head and looked at her brother roguishly, whereat Rollo smiled in a pleased way, but shook his head as if he did not particularly approve of the effect it produced in her.

She then placed it on her brother's head and danced gleefully around him.

All this proved very amusing to Frank, who was obliged to admit that the hat was not an improvement to the attire of the Silver City people.

Alma then removed her brother's head band and placed it on Frank's head, noting the effect with critical earnestness.

Evidently she greatly preferred it to the American hat.

After that Rollo and his guest left the house and came out on the broad, white street.

The sun was already several hours high, but it would not shine down into the valley until nearly noon, and then but for a short time, so hidden was the Silver City in the depths of the range.

The morning services, which took place exactly at sunrise, were gone through while Frank lay asleep, consequently he had no knowledge of the fact.

The inhabitants of the Silver City were either strolling through their white thoroughfares or seated in their reception-rooms entertaining one another or friends who dropped in to visit them.

Rollo led Frank to the third house from his own, and there Arthur was found.

The two boys were glad to meet each other again.

"Well, old man, how did you get on since we were obliged to separate last night?" inquired Art.

"First class," replied Frank, thinking of the lovely girl who had laid herself out to make things cheerful for him.

"Glad to hear it," replied Arthur. "The people of the Silver City do not seem to be such bad persons as we feared they were at first."

"I should say they're not," answered Frank, emphatically.

"The question that interests me very much is what do they really mean to do with us? So far they've treated me as if I was a nob. Is this thing going to be kept up? And will they allow us to leave the valley when we express an intention to do so? You know what that ancient mariner said—though I still maintain that he was a great liar—that he was the only white man who ever saw the hidden city of the Andes and lived to tell the tale. I think he said that the people treated him in fine shape, but that their ultimate intentions toward him were of a sinister nature—they proposed, if I remember rightly, to serve him up at a certain time as a sacrifice to their gods. I hope we're not in for anything like that, chum. It would be altogether too rough on us."

"I don't think there is any danger of that thing happening," reassured Frank. "These people seem very far from being barbarians, either in their religion or otherwise."

"It is to be hoped you are right. But how about Fred? Is he a prisoner here, too?"

"I couldn't tell you," replied Frank. "I don't see how we're going to find out as we can't converse with those people, or make ourselves understood except by signs, which is a universal, but not decidedly unsatisfactory, language."

"It worked pretty well between me and that chap who seems to have charge of me," said Arthur. "We got along famously."

"Then if you're such an expert pantomimist, go and try your luck on him with reference to Fred."

Arthur seemed doubtful about the experiment, but he was willing to try, as he was eager to hear some tidings about their English friend.

The young man's name was Alazan, though of course the boys had no way of knowing that.

Alazan and Rollo were conversing together when Arthur interrupted them with his pantomimic efforts.

They both watched his motions attentively.

Art began by holding up one finger and then pointing at Frank; a second finger, and then pointing to himself; a third finger, and pointing in the direction of the mountain tunnel.

After that he looked inquiringly at Alazan.

"I'm afraid it won't work," said Frank, as he saw the perplexed expression on the young man's face.

Alazan said something to Rollo, and Rollo answered; but it was clear they had not grasped the idea Arthur was trying to convey.

Finally Alazan shook his head.

"That settles it, Art. Your pantomime is too rocky for any one to translate."

Arthur made another attempt, with variations, but with no better success.

"I give it up," he said.

In a few minutes both Rollo and Alazan started for the street, motioning the boys to follow.

Their object was soon apparent.

They intended to show Frank and Arthur all that was to be seen of the Silver City.

They took them up one street and down another, and finally led them back to the Temple of the Sun.

They were permitted to peep into the dome-room, where the religious services were held twice a day—at the rising and the setting of the sun.

The room was truly a magnificent one.

The walls were thickly studded with gold and silver plates and protuberant ornaments of the same metals; and exquisite imitations of human and other figures, and also of plants, fashioned with perfect accuracy in gold and silver, were to be seen at regular intervals.

Hidden among the metallic foliage, or creeping among the roots, were many brilliantly-colored birds, serpents, lizards, etc., made chiefly of precious stones.

On the western wall, and opposite the eastern portal, was a splendid representation of the Sun, the god of the Incas.

It consisted of a human face in gold, with innumerable golden rays branching from it; and when the beams of the sun fell upon the golden disc, as it did for a short time almost every day, they were reflected from it as from a mirror, and again reflected through the whole temple by the numberless plates, cornices, bands, and images of gold, until the temple seemed to glow with a sunshine more intense than that of nature.

It was under these conditions that Frank and Arthur saw the temple, and the impression it left on their minds was never wiped out.

After leaving the temple the young men took the boys to the treasure-room, and here their eyes were fairly dazzled with the display of jewels, and lumps of beaten gold and silver with which the room was fairly crowded.

There were several men at work here fashioning head bands, bracelets, and a score of other articles out of the precious metals, and incrusting some of them with precious stones.

This room had no opening on the outer air, but its entrance through the interior of the temple building was just as open and unguarded as the doorway of any house in the Silver City.

Evidently such a crime as stealing was not known in the place.

"It makes a fellow's mouth water to gaze upon all this treasure," said Arthur, as his eyes greedily took in this room of stored wealth. "There must be millions here."

"Maybe not. A single million will purchase a big lot of gold, silver and precious stones."

"Well, I'd be satisfied to consider my fortune made if I owned all that is here," returned Arthur, almost enviously.

"Don't worry; you're not likely to own it," laughed Frank; and with these words he and Art, followed by their conductors, left the treasure-room of the temple.

CHAPTER XIV.

PLANNING TO ESCAPE.

"What are we going to do about Fred?" asked Arthur, when they got outside of the temple. "We can't stay here when there's a possibility that he's lost in the range somewhere. It's our place to hunt him up."

"That's right," responded Frank, "if these people will let us go. I don't like the way they treated Manuel and Sancho last night. It seemed to me that that high priest who runs things here turned them over to the Indians, and from the racket those chaps made I don't believe they meant any good to our guide and his companion. It seems to me that, in spite of the fine way they are treating us, we are actually prisoners."

"I had some such notion myself, though I didn't want to believe it. It would be mighty rough on us, if we were prevented from ever leaving this valley."

"I should say it would be," replied Frank, with some concern. "I suppose we can prove it by making an open attempt to leave."

The boys talked the matter over on the way back to Rollo's house, and finally agreed to try and make their young hosts understand that they wanted to return by the way they came.

Frank made the first move by giving Rollo to understand by pantomime that he wanted his friend to remain with him.

This worked satisfactorily up to the general dinner hour in Silver City, which seemed to be about half-past four.

At that hour Alazan called for Arthur, and he had to accompany him to his home.

Frank, Rollo and Alma ate dinner together.

After the meal Rollo went out, leaving his sister to entertain Frank.

The girl's beauty and vivacity held the boy a captive until the approach of the sunset hour, when Alma had to leave him to take part in the evening services at the temple.

Frank and Arthur were both left entirely to themselves while all the inhabitants were at worship, and they took advantage of the fact to come together at the entrance to the Rollo home.

"The best thing we can do," said Frank, "will be to get up early to-morrow, and, while the people are all at the temple for morning worship, and nobody on the watch, make a break for the tunnel and get a hustle on for the monastery of the Black Brotherhood."

This proposal suited Arthur, and the matter was so decided.

Both boys accordingly arose just before sunrise, but kept to their rooms until the coast was clear, and then they came together on the street and started for the end of the valley.

Everything went well with them till they reached the mouth of the tunnel, which they located without much difficulty.

They were already congratulating themselves on their good luck when their way was suddenly barred by two stalwart natives, who had been lying in the grass near the tunnel, apparently on guard.

The natives pounced on them, though without violence, and marched them back to the portals of the Silver City, where they motioned them to return toward the temple.

The boys obeyed, much crestfallen and disappointed.

"What chumps we are," cried Arthur, angrily. "We might have shot those two chaps and have made our escape."

"No," replied Frank. "I don't believe in committing murder in order to get away. Besides, there were others near by that shots would have attracted."

"But they have no right to detain us here against our will."

"Might makes right in this valley, like it does in many civilized communities."

"If that's a fact, then we're booked for a long stay, I'm afraid," replied Arthur, disconsolately.

Evidently they were, for when Frank, by signs at breakfast, intimated his desire to leave the valley, Rollo shook his head.

Frank's disappointment was so apparent that Alma looked sad.

Every day for more than a week Frank repeated his desire to leave the Silver City with his companions, but met with the same negative reply.

Seeing that it was useless to press the matter further, the boy ceased to bring the matter up before Rollo again; but from that hour he and Arthur, when they came together, as they did two and three times a day, consulted continually as to how they could manage to outwit their captors and ultimately make their escape.

Rollo and Alazan, who had charge of them, treated them with the greatest kindness, and tried in a variety of ways to amuse them and take their attention off their previous life, while Alma herself resorted to every fascinating device she was mistress of to interest Frank in the manners and customs, as well as the language, of her people; but though the boy was not insensible to her attractive personality, and was flattered by the marked interest she displayed toward him, neither he nor Arthur could reconcile themselves to their gilded captivity.

"It was the 3d of August when we came into this valley," said Frank one morning, "and we've been here now ten days."

"And likely to stay ten weeks, or months, or even years,"

growled Art in a discontented tone. "We were fools ever to think of penetrating down into the depths of the Andes in our crazy search for the buried city of the Incas. You remember the priest at the Convent at LaPaz told us that many persons went in search of this place and not one, other than the two monks one hundred and sixteen years ago, ever returned to relate their adventures; and the monks in question did not find the Silver City, but merely some of the ornaments of the inhabitants, which are now in the convent museum."

"That's right," nodded Frank. "If any of those searchers actually reached this city, as we have done, they were either detained indefinitely or put out of the way altogether."

"We haven't seen a thing of Manuel or Sancho since they were separated from us the night we were captured. They were turned over to the Indians, who are a fierce looking lot, and pretty low in the human scale, I should judge. I wouldn't be surprised to learn that the rascals had done them up. It's funny how the people of the city, who appear to be entirely unarmed, can keep such a wild lot in subjection. They don't dare pass the city limits, in spite of the fact that they possess ugly-looking spears and are uncommonly strong. They seem to do all the work for the Silver City people. The men till the fields and carry burdens, while each family in the town has one of their young women to do the cooking and housework."

"It must be religious fear that holds them down. They've no doubt always been slaves, and they can't get away from that fact."

"Mr. Leslie has, of course, got back to LaPaz before this, and I am sure he will use extraordinary efforts to find his son, as well as us, for whose safety he must consider himself responsible. Of course, if Fred did not find his way back to the monastery of the Black Brotherhood within a short time, there is little doubt but he lost himself in these mountains and has long before this perished of starvation."

"It is known to the proprietor of the Hotel LaPaz that we started for the monastery of the Black Brotherhood, and consequently Mr. Leslie will aim for that point the first thing. He will find out there, either from Fred, if he returned, or from the monks if he didn't, that all of us took the path down the precipice. He will, of course, follow us that way, but unless he discovers the tunnel, through Fred, if he is alive, there will be no clue to our present whereabouts and his search will be a vain one."

"And suppose he does find the way down here," said Arthur. "His party will naturally be small, and must fall easy prey to the Indian sentries, just as we did."

Altogether their prospects of deliverance did not look very bright.

Still the two boys were not discouraged as yet.

They did not mean to give up all hope until they had exhausted every expedient possible to accomplish their escape.

"As the exit by the tunnel seems to be constantly guarded, we must try to get out of this forsaken spot some other way," said Frank. "We must watch our chance, provide ourselves with food to carry, and then seek some other outlet up the range."

"That's a pretty desperate risk," replied Art; "but I'm ready to attempt it when you say the word, for I don't care to stay here indefinitely."

"The chief risk is that we'll be lost in the fastnesses of the Andes the moment we leave the valley," replied Frank.

"We'll always have Mount Illimani for a guide. We know that LaPaz is only twenty-five miles to the west of it. All we'll have to do is to make for the LaPaz Valley and—"

"It's easy to talk, Art; but to make our way two miles on more up these mountains, by the roundabout way we'll have to take, will be enough to try our nerves and endurance to the utmost. Still I don't see that there is any other way left for us to escape. Whether we survive the ordeal will be as much a question of luck as anything else."

"I'll take the chance any time rather than stay here. I have had all I want of the Silver City."

"We will have to be cautious in all our movements," advised Frank. "We must go slow, and pretend to get contented with our lot here. That will disarm any suspicions these people may entertain against us. We'll be able to wander around the valley at will, and during these little excursions we must keep our eyes open for some unguarded point in the range, through which we can make our way when we get ready to put our plan in execution."

"Well, if we are stopped again or pursued by the Indians, I consider it will be perfectly justifiable on our part to use

our weapons even if we have to kill several of them. Self-preservation is the first law of nature."

"Circumstances will have to decide that question when the time comes," replied Frank. "I am opposed to bloodshed if it can be avoided."

"So am I on general principles; but not when it's a question of getting back to civilization or staying here for the rest of our days."

And there the matter rested for the time being.

CHAPTER XV.

THE DAWN OF LOVE.

On the following day the boys, while walking about the suburbs of the Silver City, noticed a commotion up the valley. Their hearts suddenly beat quickly, at the thought that this might be a rescue party in search of them.

Their hopes dropped when they made out a party of Indians advancing with shouts toward the city.

It looked as if more intruders into the hidden valley had been caught in the act, just as they had been.

"Some more unfortunates, I suppose," remarked Frank. "Can it be possible that this is Mr. Leslie and his searchers?"

It appeared, however, that there was only one prisoner this time, and the boys were not kept long in suspense as to his identity.

To the lads' surprise, and we might almost say delight, they recognized Fred Leslie.

Not that they were glad to find him a prisoner, too, on the principle that misery loves company, but because of the great relief they felt to know at last that their English friend had not perished of hunger and thirst in the mountains.

Still he looked something of a wreck, as if he and hard luck had lately been on close terms.

His captors halted, as was their custom, on the edge of the town limits not far from where Frank and Arthur stood, and uttered peculiar outcries that were supposed to be signals indicating the cause of their presence there.

Frank and Arthur deserted Rollo and Alazan in a twinkling and rushed up to Fred with outstretched arms.

They expected he would be astonished to find them there, but he was not.

"Hello, dear boys!" exclaimed Fred, with a cheerful smile on his good-looking countenance. "They've caught me at last, just as they did you."

"Why, how did you know we were here?" asked the others in a breath, clearly astonished by his words.

"Oh, I knew. I was hiding near those two houses down yonder when you two, with Manuel and Sancho, came up the valley, and I tried to warn you of what was ahead of you, for I knew those three chaps that faced you first were concealed in the grass. Before I could do anything the crowd of Indians rushed out upon you and the mischief was done."

"And have you been in the valley ever since?" asked Frank.

"I have. I hid in one of those houses during the day, and foraged for provisions at night. I've tried my best to reach the tunnel so as to get away and bring back and expedition to effect your rescue. But it was no use. The place is under guard night and day now since you were captured in order, I suppose, to prevent you from leaving the valley."

"Now that you have been taken, too, there is no chance that your father will be able to learn of our fate."

"I'm afraid not," replied Frank, soberly. "However, we must try and effect our escape on the sly at the first chance."

"That's what Art and I have been figuring on doing. But I say, we're awfully glad to know that you are alive and all right. We thought maybe you were lost in the tunnel somewhere, because we didn't find any sign of your presence there during the entire distance. It's bad enough for you to be a prisoner with us, but it's better than if you were lying dead somewhere in these wilds."

"Yes," replied Fred, "much better, for while there's life there's hope, you know."

At this moment a messenger came from the temple to conduct the prisoner into the presence of the high priest.

Frank and Arthur insisted on going with their friend, and Rollo and Alazan offered no objection, though they accompanied their guests.

The priest seemed surprised to see another boy of the same color as the other prisoners, as we may as well call them.

Rollo stepped forward to tell him that the newcomer was a friend of the others.

The result was Fred was placed in charge of a young man

of the same grade as Alazan, and allowed the same liberty of action that was accorded to Frank and Arthur.

After that, except at night and during meals, no restriction was placed upon the three lads being in each other's company as often and as long as they pleased.

They spent the larger part of their time devising means of escape, though they pretended to gradually fall into the ways and habits of the inhabitants of the Silver City.

Thus several weeks elapsed without any opportunity occurring to favor their strike-out for liberty.

Frank unconsciously became more and more interested in the fair Peruvian girl, and gradually devoted a larger portion of his time to her society.

This was observed by Rollo with evident pleasure, and he encouraged their intimacy in every way he could.

Frank by slow degrees picked up bits of the dialect of the Silver City people, and Alma helped him to acquire this knowledge by the most patient endeavor.

She devoted two hours a day to his instruction, and soon found him an apt and eager pupil.

Frank believed that if he could learn to talk with Rollo and Alma even a little bit at a time, he would greatly benefit not only himself but his companions as well.

He knew he had won their devoted friendship, even as they had imperceptibly captured his, and he relied upon that in a measure to smooth their way to freedom.

He could not know, of course, that Rollo and Alma, even if they sympathized with his project, could not move a finger to assist in his escape, owing to their sworn allegiance to the mandates of the high priest, who was the sole arbiter of destiny in the Silver City.

"Well," said Fred one morning to Frank, "how long have we been in the valley now? You've been keeping a record, I believe."

Frank consulted his memorandum book and announced that that day was the first of October, and consequently they had been prisoners in the valley for two months lacking three days.

"And we seem to be as far from making our escape as we were the day we came here," said Arthur, with a resigned air. "I wonder if our fathers have given us up as lost," he added, soberly. "Poor dad and marm—they must be in a sad way over my disappearance."

This reflection was a damper on the boy's spirits for a while, but gradually the effect wore off as they began to consider fresh plans for deliverance.

"How are you getting on with the language?" asked Fred at last. "You ought to make good progress under such a beautiful teacher as you have."

Frank colored; for, to tell the truth, he was beginning to take an uncommon interest in Alma, and was even experiencing twinges of reluctance at the thought of leaving her, as it must be if he escaped, for ever.

"Oh, rather slow," he replied. "It's pretty hard work, but I'm doing my best."

"You'd better hurry up if you expect to make anything out of it before we get ready to skiddoo from here," grinned Art, "for you can't tell when the time will come, and we will have to grasp it on the fly, or probably lose the chance."

After that Frank devoted more time to learning the dialect, while the other boys wandered around the valley together picking up points looking to their final exit from the place.

Frank, however, was learning something more than the language of the Silver City from Alma, and she was also acquiring from him new thoughts and feelings.

If their tongues were fettered to a large extent their eyes were not, and eyes are dangerous conductors sometimes.

The more they were in each other's company the more they wanted to be.

Alma was just beginning to realize that the young stranger was becoming dearer to her than even her brother, while Frank one day awoke to the fact that when he left the hidden valley there was something he wouldn't be able to carry away with him, and that was his heart.

That knowledge started a struggle in his breast—could he leave her when the momentous hour arrived?

As the days went by this became a very serious problem with him, so serious indeed that it gave him little rest.

One night after the boys had been four months in the valley, Frank and Alma were sitting alone in the early twilight after she had returned from the sunset service, during which Frank had sat with his companions at the door of the Rollo home more than usually entranced under the

influence of her pure soprano voice as it floated out of the temple on the afternoon air.

Fred and Arthur had been telling him of certain discoveries they had made that day, which promised to open the road to freedom to them, and they were jubilant over the fact.

Apparently the hour when he must part with Alma was close at hand and this thought made him somber and silent.

The girl detected the change in his manner instantly and viewed it with great concern.

It was the universal language of love that flashed from her limpid eyes as they looked into his, and the thrill that went through Frank's veins showed that in spirit at least they understood each other.

Forgetful of every other consideration except the fact that he cared for this girl more than any other being in the world, even his father, he suddenly threw his arms around her, and drawing her to him kissed her on the lips.

Alma uttered a cry and started back in a startled way, and this action on her part brought Frank to his senses.

He started to apologize in English, forgetting she could not understand, but he soon saw that she was not offended.

For a moment she covered her eyes with her hands, then stood trembling like a little child before him.

He grasped one of her hands and carried it to his lips without the least resistance on her part.

Then he stepped back and held out his arms to her.

She looked up, gazed into his face with eyes that shone like twin stars, hesitated and then, with a modest reluctance that well became her, she raised her own arms and placed them in his with his head slightly bent.

He did not know that by this act she had, according to the Inca custom, sacredly pledged herself to him forever.

But what he did realize was that she loved him, even as he loved her, and as he once more drew her toward him unresistingly, and she laid her shapely head on his shoulder, he felt that he was supremely happy.

CHAPTER XVI.

WEDDED IN THE TEMPLE OF THE SUN.

Next morning Rollo met Frank with a beaming eye, and putting one arm around the boy's neck saluted him with a kiss on the forehead.

At first Frank was greatly surprised at this greeting, but when Alma entered the room and her brother, taking her by the hand, led her blushing but happily up to the young American and joined their hands, Frank then understood that the beautiful girl had told Rollo the secret that was so dear to her.

The lovers, as we must call them, were left alone until breakfast was put on the table, and then Rollo joined them.

For some days after that Frank was unusually reserved with his companions.

They told him of the preparations they were making for their escape.

Of the food they had got possession of and hidden in a rocky cave, and other arrangements all looking toward the fulfilment of their hopes.

A few days after that an unexpected denouement happened.

It was the hour of the service of the setting sun, and the three boys were sitting by themselves in their usual meeting spot, the doorway of the Rollo house.

The sun had set, the incense had floated out on the evening air, and the chanting of the priests, mingled with Alma's wonderful soprano, had died away into silence.

The boys were looking to see the people of the Silver City pour out of the temple, as was their custom at the close of the service.

Instead of that one young man appeared, coming down the stone steps alone.

It was Rollo, and he came directly over to his home.

"Come," he said, marching up to the surprised Dudley, and putting his arm around his neck. "You must go with me to the temple."

Frank understood him and rose to his feet, but he was, nevertheless, astonished, for he had learned that no one but a believer in the Inca faith was permitted in the temple when the priests and people were gathered there.

Nevertheless he could only obey Rollo's request, which was practically an order.

"What's up now?" asked Arthur, uneasily, as he and Fred watched their companion depart with Rollo and then ascend

the steps into the temple. "I don't like the looks of it for a copper cent."

"It's a mystery to me," answered Fred. "I hope they don't mean him any harm."

Arthur insisted that it had a sinister look.

And while they talked in a way that showed their uneasiness, the chanting of the priests and the chorus of the young girls was resumed, but the soprano voice of Alma was missing.

Then once more came a solemn silence that filled Fred and Arthur with fresh anxiety.

It was succeeded with a burst of song from the entire congregation of the temple, which continued several minutes.

Then came a cloud of incense floating through the holes in the silver dome, and the chorus of the girls and chanting of the priests was renewed.

When this had died away the people came flocking out, but instead of dispersing as usual they formed in two lines from the temple to the edge of the Rollo property.

"Gee whiz!" cried Art, in astonishment, "what's this, anyway?"

Out from the temple came the bevy of chorus girls singing a simple air, and throwing flowers and sprays of green leaves in front of them as they walked down the lane formed by the people.

Immediately behind them followed Frank Dudley and Alma, hand in hand, the girl decked in flowers from head to foot, through which her jeweled diadem and ornaments flashed in the light of numberless torches.

"Suffering sixpence!" gasped Arthur, to the amazed Fred. "It looks like a wedding show."

Behind Frank and Alma walked Rollo, and behind him his six personal friends.

Then as the Rollo home was reached the procession paused, and Alazan and his friend, who had charge of Arthur and Fred, came forward and beckoned the two boys to follow them.

They did so and were accorded a position on either side of Rollo himself.

The procession then moved on again.

It passed three times around the temple, the high priest and his assistants standing on the steps to view it, and then it mounted to a big gathering hall in the southern wing of the building.

Here were tables spread with fruit and nuts, and silver flagons of a liquor resembling a rich cordial.

All the inhabitants of the Silver City crowded in after the principal participants of the show, and for an hour there was a species of high jinks, with Frank and Alma as the head and front of it all.

At the close of the feast the high priest appeared, clothed in his ordinary attire, without the glittering vestment he wore during the religious services.

He made a short speech to the bride and groom of this singular wedding, and then presented Alma with a magnificent necklace of alternate diamonds and rubies, the pendant being a solid gold ornament in which stood an uncommonly fine solitaire.

To Dudley he presented a pair of heavy gold bracelets and a gold ring with a large and particularly fine ruby.

It was the custom of the Incas that the bride and groom, with such friends as they selected, should spend the marriage night in the sacred cave of the Sun.

Accordingly, when the high priest withdrew, Alma selected her brother; and she succeeded in making Frank understand that he could choose his two friends, which he did.

Surrounded by torch bearers, they made their way to the cave in the great mountain to the east of the city.

Here the five were left for the night.

The cave was partly natural and partly hewn out of solid rock.

An immense figure of the sun was cut on one of the walls.

There was nothing else in the place but a long stone seat directly under the image of the sun, and on this the five seated themselves, Rollo next to his sister, while Arthur and Fred sat alongside of Frank.

"Are we to stay here all night in this fashion?" asked Arthur, thinking how uncomfortable it was going to be.

Frank spoke to Alma in her native tongue, though he was not very successful at it as yet, and she gave him to understand that all were to remain there until the sun rose, and Frank passed the information on to his friends.

"So you're really married to Rollo's sister, are you?" asked Arthur.

"According to the Inca custom, I am," he answered.

"You've caught a dandy wife, all right; but how is this go-

ing to affect your escape from the valley? We are almost ready to light out."

"I mean to take Alma with me."

"But will she go? Will she leave her brother and—"

He never completed the sentence, for just then, without the least warning, the ground began to rock and heave in the throes of a great earthquake, alongside of which all the others the boys had felt since they came to South America were like mere flea-bite.

Consternation ensued among the five young people in the cave.

They would have rushed forth into the air, but in the glare of the falling torches they saw the whole front of the cavern fall in with a fearful crash.

Alma uttered a thrilling scream and threw her arms around her young husband.

Then she hung limp and insensible in his arms.

Alma recovered her senses after a time and lay trembling and unnerved in Frank's arms.

At last morning dawned, and then the occupants of the sacred sun-cave saw that they were not buried alive as they had feared they were.

The cavern was badly shattered, the front of it being completely demolished, but there was a large opening through which they were able to make their way into the open air.

Where was the Silver City of the night before?

Gone from sight.

It was buried under heaps of rocky debris.

Not a vestige but a small section of a single wing of the temple remained to show that the town had ever existed.

And with it had disappeared every man, woman and child who dwelt within it at the moment the earthquake swooped down on the devoted valley.

And Alma and Rollo, as they gazed upon the awful scene of devastation which had been wrought in a night, trembled and wept, for they were the last survivors of the ancient Inca dynasty of Huascar, whose defeated followers had fled to that Bolivian valley and founded the Silver City, now no more.

As soon as Frank recovered from his astonishment he devoted his efforts to comforting Alma and her brother, but it was some time before their spirits became at all composed.

As Alma wouldn't let Frank from her side, Fred and Arthur went forth together to ascertain how things stood in the valley with reference to their escape from the place.

They were gone for more than an hour, and when they returned they brought what they considered remarkable news.

First, they had discovered the storehouse of the Silver City in the hills, filled with dried cereals and fruits.

Second, the earthquake had opened up to view a swiftly flowing underground river, which they believed led to the Pacific Ocean.

Third, caught in a bite of the bank, they had discovered a flat-bottomed boat, in good condition and laden with empty petroleum cans, that must at some time have come down from the lower part of the LaPaz valley.

Fourth, they had found that a great crevasse had opened in the valley, cutting off all approach to the mouth of the long mountain tunnel.

The only feasible way of escape that they could see lay in trusting themselves to the boat and floating in it down to its outlet.

And this proposition they laid before Frank with the expectation that it would meet with his approval.

The two boys had each brought with them an armful of dried fruit and cakes, prepared by the Indians, of powdered meal which had been mixed with water and baked.

When the boys had satisfied their appetites the party set out for the spot where the boat was lying in the indentation of the underground bank.

While Frank was examining her Rollo and Alma sat together with arms entwined, entirely oblivious of what was going on.

The cans were removed from the boat, and a number of them washed out and dried with grass to make them suitable to hold a quantity of provisions to support the little party for a week or two.

By noon everything was in readiness for them to embark on the underground river.

Long before this Rollo and his sister had picked their way over the broken ground to the ruins of the Silver City and could be seen sitting on the stones of that portion of the temple building which alone appeared above the surface of the ground.

Frank went out to let them know that the time was come when they must leave the valley and their dead race forever.

Before speaking to them Dudley walked slowly about the ruins of the temple.

The sun was now shining down into the hidden valley, and its rays, shooting into the solitary section of the former magnificent building that was not wholly buried from sight, were reflected back from a thousand brilliant objects.

For a moment or two Frank was puzzled to account for this strange circumstance until he discovered to his astonishment that he was gazing down into the treasure-room of the buried city.

The sunshine was flashing upon hundreds of gems and plates of dull gold that lay about upon the broken floors and walls in the greatest confusion.

He signaled to Arthur and Fred to come out there.

The two boys did and were equally astonished at the sight Frank pointed out to them.

Preparations were immediately made to secure the treasure.

It took the rest of the day to clean out the balance of the cans and fill them partly full of gems and blocks of pure gold and a small quantity of silver.

The treasure was carefully packed and covered with thick grass, the jewels alone filling several cans.

It was just sundown when they finished their last meal in the valley and were ready to go.

By this time Alma and Rollo were resigned to their great loss.

The last rays of the sun lay upon the snow-capped tip of Mount Illimani, and toward that point Rollo and Alma faced.

They both began to sing a mournful requiem to the departed souls of their people.

It was a sad and weird melody, and as the three boys listened to it in respectful silence the tears came into their eyes.

At last it ceased, and the hidden valley of the Andes had heard it for the last time.

Five days later the flatboat shot out into a wide valley backed by the foothills of the Andes and faced by the Pacific Ocean.

Here they found plenty evidences of civilization, and, hauling in at a village, they succeeded in finding a man who could speak English fairly well.

From him Frank ascertained that the Peruvian port of Mollendo, where they had disembarked for their trip to LaPaz five months before—for the date was now December 18—was only fifty miles to the north.

Arrangements were made to have the flatboat towed to that port, and four days later they entered the harbor of Mollendo.

While Fred and Arthur remained to guard the treasure on the flatboat, Frank escorted Rollo and Alma to the best hotel in town.

Frank as soon as possible called on the mayor and gave a rough outline of the adventures he and his two friends had been through since leaving LaPaz to inspect the convent of the Black Brotherhood in the Andes.

The boy learned that their mysterious disappearance had been published throughout southern Peru and the State of Bolivia, and that the government of the latter State had been searching for them for months without success.

Mr. Leslie was at LaPaz, hoping almost against hope.

A dispatch was at once sent to him that the boys had turned up safe and sound at Mollendo, and he hastened to that town as fast as traveling facilities could carry him.

A portion of the treasure was disposed of in Mollendo, the amount realized being over \$100,000, and the balance was box and conveyed to San Francisco, en route to New York, where the bulk of it was sold, and something over a million in money received in exchange, which was equally divided among the boys and the last two survivors of the Inca race.

Frank and Alma were regularly married at his father's Irvington home, and, with Rollo for their constant companion, took up their residence there.

Fred Leslie subsequently returned to England with his father, and during the summer of that year Frank and Alma, accompanied by Arthur and Rollo, visited them at their Surrey estate.

It was a happy reunion for the young people, who frequently recalled their adventures in South America when practically lost in the Andes.

Next week's issue will contain "ON HIS METTLE; OR, A PLUCKY BOY IN WALL STREET."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

CURRENT NEWS

A bequest of \$1,000 to her twelve-year-old cat, Tiger, was pleaded by J. W. Ross, a wealthy Chicagoan, as evidence of mental incapacity of his wife in a contest started by the will of Mrs. Nellie L. S. Ross. Ross, who brought the contest through attorneys of Los Angeles, was not mentioned in the will. The estate is valued at \$30,000.

The steamer Prince Albert was refused clearance for Mazatlan by the Collector of Customs because of a suspicion that arms and ammunition she brought from San Francisco the other night were intended for a filibustering expedition in Mexico. She was allowed to sail, however, after she left on the dock fifty-four cases of rifles and 100,000 cartridges.

After a week of sunshine the farmers of Hume, Mo., are busy saving the grain crops, and on account of the scarcity of help the women are at work in the fields. The women on most every farm are either riding a cultivator or driving a mower or rake. Crops are good here if the sunshine will last long enough to let the farmers save them.

The Overseas Club is to adopt a suggestion from Canada to sow seeds of the maple around the graves, cemeteries or by the roads leading to the cemeteries where Canadian soldiers are buried in France and Flanders. Consignments of seeds are being dispatched from Toronto. It is also proposed to plant an avenue of maple trees at Lange-marck after the war.

Up to the first of August 9,350,000 persons had passed through the exposition turnstiles. The income from admissions from Feb. 20 to July 11 amounted to \$1,568,126.80. The receipts from concessions amounted to \$676,810.02; the miscellaneous income was \$775,337.40. The gross income since the opening on Feb. 20 until July 11 was \$3,202,274.22.

James C. Duggens, a farmer, who lives on the Laughery Creek, near Aurora, Ind., has a water spaniel that is noted along the stream for its method of catching fish. The dog has caught several hundred pounds during the last few months for its owner and his neighbors. The dog dives into the water and soon appears with a fish in its mouth, and will repeat its diving for several hours at a time.

Charging that a trained goat belonging to Shirley Alverado, of Cincinnati, Ohio, had destroyed one pair of silk tights which had adorned her shapely limbs for dessert and chewed up a pair of silk stockings and a real lace shoe. Miss Marie Chapron, actress at an amusement resort, has brought suit against Alverado. She asks \$500 damages, charging that she suffered "great mental pain and anguish."

The marriage of Miss Irene Spillner and Fred C. Spillner, of Janesville, Wis., recently marks the first time that a brother and sister have assumed the relations of husband and wife as far as the records of Rock County show. The bridegroom was legally adopted by the Spillner family when a lad in his teens, and many acquaintances did not know he ever bore another name. Consequently there was great surprise among friends of the family when the marriage was announced. The couple was married by Judge Charles L. Fifield of the County Court.

Nathan English, of Port Crane, N. Y., celebrated his one hundredth birthday by inviting friends and newspaperman to spend the day with him to prove it is possible to live 100 years without following any special rules. He has smoked since he was fifteen, taken a drink when he wanted it and enjoyed life when not working hard on his several farms. To show how active he is, English turned several hand-springs on the lawn in front of his daughter's home. He then jumped a four-foot picket fence and climbed into an automobile, shouting back he thought he would just take a ride into the city.

College boys make the poorest farm hands, say the farmers of Blackwell, Okla., who have had all kinds during the recent harvest. Every season hundreds of the students from Eastern States hear of the call for hands in Oklahoma and other Western wheat fields, and come West with the idea of earning enough to pay their way through school the following season. A very small percentage of the students who come West, however, last through the entire harvest, and if they do last through one, they seek other employment the following year. The reason for this, the farmers say, is that the Eastern college man as a rule knows nothing about the farm and farm work. Neither do the mechanics, miners and other trades, who also enlist in the army of harvesters every year.

The city of Montevideo now possesses an electric plant of large size, and within a recent period it has been extending operations on a good scale. In the station are now erected four alternators operated by horizontal steam engines. One of these alternators is of 1,000 kw. size, while the other three have 1,700 kw. capacity each. In addition to these groups, a steam turbine set of European make was erected in 1911, this group being rated at 4,000 kw. and it runs at 1,500 revolutions per minute, but it can be run on 5,000 kw. load for a short time. This steam turbine set has now given such good results that a second group of the same kind was ordered at a later date. The state of Uruguay has made great progress in modern applications of electric current, and it is said that the Government is engaged on plans for erecting electric stations in different small towns which are established on a well-designed and uniform plan.

SIX WEEKS IN THE MOON

— OR —

A TRIP BEYOND THE ZENITH

By ED. KING

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER I.

WHICH IS PURELY ANALYTICAL.

How often we study the face of that regular and faithful satellite of the earth which we call the moon. How little we have been able to learn of its true nature, of its composition, or of its inhabitants, if indeed it is inhabited. Upon this point there is a great diversity of opinion.

The moon is the nearest to us of all heavenly bodies, being only some two hundred and thirty-seven thousand five hundred and seventeen miles' distant. This will seem quite near, when we take into consideration the fact that the sun is distant some ninety-five millions of miles.

To travel to the sun on an ordinary express train would hardly admit of reaching one's destination in a lifetime. The train might reach the moon in a little less than two years.

Scientists, astronomers, and all sorts of learned men, have for centuries studied the planets, which there can never be any hope of intercourse with. Strangely enough, they have commonly overlooked that world which is almost at our door, and which powerful glasses will yet be invented strong enough to enable us to see every detail upon its surface.

That it is in topography not unlike the earth, that it has an atmosphere like ours, that it has seasons and changes of heat and cold, has long ago been indisputably proved.

Why, then, should it not support human life? What great obstacle existed to a possible visit to the great world which is our night luminary? These were questions which suggested themselves to a couple of the brightest youths in the Rodman School of Chemistry and Sciences.

Perhaps their worthy preceptor, old Prof. Elias Burton, was partly responsible for the instilling of the project into the boys' minds.

Before we go further we must impress upon the reader that Ned Davis and Dick Rodman were not ordinary boys. They were smart in the truest sense of the term. If they had not been they could never have carried to a successful termination the project which furnishes the motive and incidents of this marvelous tale.

They were both sons of wealthy men, the Rodmans and Davises being the magnates of Rodmantown. Col. Preston Rodman was a descendant of the early founder of the

town; and he was also owner of the big machine works which bore his name. Nathan Davis was Ned's father, and a millionaire.

The boys had early been placed in the charge of Prof. Elias Benton. What wonder then that they had imbibed some of his ideas? And he was full to overflowing with the project of establishing communication with the moon.

Some people called him crazy on the subject. But they were wrong. The old professor was level, as was afterwards proved.

In the top of his house he had constructed a laboratory with an observation tower. Here upon clear nights the boys were sure to be found with him, engaged in studying the moon, and a fascinating study it was, too.

Through the powerful glass owned by the professor, every phase of the luminary was clearly studied. Soon the young astronomers had become almost as familiar with its changes and peculiarities as with the geography of their own world.

For a long time the project of communication with the moon formed a daily subject of discussion between the boys and the professor.

Ned believed that the mystic realms of electricity, not to this day half explored, furnished a method. To unearth and prove this was the question, but that they would not fail to do sooner or later the trio felt very sure. They bent their wits to this end.

As a result something of importance was bound to accrue. It was Dick's theory that a series of powerful balloons, so constructed that they could be navigated, would do. But Professor Benton exploded this.

"After we reach the limit of terrestrial atmosphere," he said, "and it is believed beyond all reasonable doubt that the earth's atmosphere has a no very distant limit, then we should come to space."

"Space!" exclaimed Ned Davis; "would we not be in space all the while?"

"By no means."

"Is not air space?"

"We sometimes designate it as such, but correctly speaking it is an element, and a tangible one, also. Space must be—nothing. It has no existence, no shape, no feeling. We could not live in space, for the necessary elements would be lacking. Whether this sort of space really exists between the atmospherical limit of our earth and that of the planets has ever been a much mooted question."

"The average scientist pooh-poohs any other theory, but there is no ocular proof. No one has ever yet been up there to determine the question. Even if one could get there, he would hardly be able to bring back his impressions, for he would not come back alive."

The boys listened respectfully and with interest.

"Bear in mind always," said the professor, "that oxygen alone supports human life. There is no use trying to prove truths upon the preposterous basis of guesswork. This sort of thing has been going on from time immemorial. Until somebody actually explores that wonderful region beyond our atmospherical limit, it will continue. I don't believe half the astronomical calculations are true. They are merely estimates."

The boys glanced skyward. There rode the silver moon in the blue ether, a beautiful sight. No wonder they were enraptured. No wonder the thought of a possible visit to that distant sphere thrilled them. Ned stretched out his arms and cried:

"Oh, beautiful Luna. How I wish I could reach you."

"But that we must give up, if what Prof. Benton says is so!" said Dick. "I know of no other means to reach there but with a balloon!"

"That is what I started to explain!" declared the professor. "If the distance between us and the moon was only occupied by atmosphere, we could no doubt succeed. But there are nicely adjusted points of gravity between the earth and all other heavenly bodies, without which neither would be held in its orbit. All worlds would be drawn instantly together at one common point. Now this dividing line of gravitation lies somewhere between us and the moon, perhaps exactly halfway. In order, therefore, to get within the influence of that power of gravitation which would draw us down, or land us upon the moon's surface, some propelling power must throw us beyond that line. Do you understand?"

"I do!" cried Ned. "You mean that the balloon would never be able to carry us to that line."

"Do you understand why?"

"It is the pressure of the heavier atmosphere about the balloon which causes the light gases within to carry it up," said Dick, "consequently when the balloon reached the limit of the atmosphere it would lose its power of propulsion and stop."

"Just so!" cried the professor. "What would be the result? We would be in the verge of space, and could only fall back to the earth, or perhaps be held there by some opposing forces of gravitation forever."

Both boys drew a deep breath. They looked disappointed.

"Then I'm afraid we shall never reach the moon," said Dick, "unless we can find some power to propel us beyond the space limit of gravitation between the moon and the earth."

"Even then," cried Ned, "we could not live in space a moment."

"This latter difficulty could be overcome," declared the professor, "by the use of chemical reservoirs of oxygen, such as are used in submarine boats. If a shell of steel could be constructed perfectly airtight and fitted with

these generators, one could travel safely, provided a propelling force could be found."

"But how could anything be propelled through space?" cried Dick. "What resistance would there be for a propeller to gather its impetus from? It seems to me everything must remain in suspension there or else keep forever falling!"

"Now you have a correct comprehension of the subject and its difficulties," declared Professor Elias. "I have spent a lifetime trying to devise some safe method of getting hurled so far beyond the zenith that one must necessarily cross the atmospherical limit and fall into the moon."

"But would not such a fall in itself prove fatal? Would not it be as bad as falling upon the earth?" asked Ned.

"Ah, but that could be easily provided for," declared the professor. "At the right moment parachutes could be thrown open and the fall made safely."

"Another question," asked Dick; "how could a safe return be made to the earth?"

"By the same method the trip is made to the moon," said Professor Elias; "it is a poor rule which will not work both ways."

It was a late hour when the boys wended their way home that night. But it was not to sleep.

Both were so full of the fascinating subject that they did little but toss restlessly and hold it in excited revolution in their active brains.

Both stayed at Dick's house that night. In the morning Ned started for home, but Dick, after a light breakfast, went immediately down to the machine shops owned by his father.

Dick was a fine mechanic as well as a scientific student. To encourage his boy in these pursuits, Mr. Rodman had allowed him to fit up a fine workshop of his own in the building. Into this Dick now went and closed the door after him.

He did not come out until long after nightfall. He had been wrestling with a mighty problem in those hours. The result was to be a tremendous revelation, and forever make his fame.

CHAPTER II.

WHICH DESCRIBES THE PRODUCT OF DICK RODMAN'S BRAIN.

There were two people who were immensely skeptical upon the idea of successful intercourse with the moon, and laughed and pooh-poohed incessantly at the hobby of Prof. Elias.

These men were the fathers of our two boys, Colonel Rodman and Nathan Davis.

They met upon the street one day, and in his bluff manner Mr. Davis accosted the colonel.

"I say, Preston, what the deuce are the boys up to? Why, Ned is so cranky that he will not answer a question otherwise but in a snappish way. Those two boys are closeted half the time, and as near as I can learn are studying up some sort of a scheme to pay a visit to the moon!"

(To be continued)

ITEMS OF INTEREST

INMAN, BILLIARDIST, LOSES.

Melbourne Inman, the English billiard champion, has at last met with defeat in London. Conceding Newman 2,250 start in an 18,000 up game for \$250 a side, he just failed to beat his young rival by 649 points. At one time the champion got within 100 points of Newman, but a final desperate effort by the latter got himself well out of danger. This is Newman's last game until the war is over, as he has volunteered for work in one of the Government munition factories.

ANTIDOTE FOR SNAKE VENOM.

India's annual loss of over 20,000 lives from snake bite has forced the production of an antidote serum. The Parel Laboratory, Bombay, keeps a supply of cobras from which venom is extracted every ten days. The snakes are forcibly fed with egg flip through a tube. The venom is dried over lime and then dissolved in a salt solution. Increasing doses are injected in a horse until at the end of two years the animal can stand a dose 200 times the original one and is quite immune from the cobra poison. The serum from the blood of this particular horse is an antidote and is absolutely effective if injected in time. Many lives have been saved by its use. However, each bite requires an antidote made from the venom of the same sort of snake that inflicted the bite. The Parel Laboratory is working to develop a greater variety of antidotes.

FISH GATHER IN MILLIONS.

Every summer there is a remarkable run of herring on the North Pacific coast. These fish come in such shoals that they seem a solid moving mass. They crowd into the inlets and sheltered bays and can be taken in millions by the simplest means. Men and boys on the Grand Trunk Pacific dock at Prince Rupert use waste paper baskets and similar utensils, which, with rope attached, are thrown into the water and allowed to sink below the surface, then hauled in again full to overflowing with lovely herring. But a better idea of the density of these schools of fish is afforded by the fact that fishing lines with hook attached can be sunk in the water and pulled out instantly with just as many fish as there are hooks, be there a dozen or fifty. Tons of these herring are taken by the fish companies and frozen in boxes for use as bait for the halibut fisheries. They are an excellent table fish and there ought to be a profitable market for them in the interior. As yet, comparatively few of them are shipped, though dealers are now calling for them. Fishermen say the herring seek the bays to escape the whales, which prey on them in certain localities during their migrations.

ITALY'S NEW AQUEDUCT.

The Italian Government has finished one of the most important engineering works of modern days in the construction of an immense aqueduct which carries the waters

of the Sele River—normally flowing west from the Apennines to the Tyrrhene Sea—to the city of Bari, on the Adriatic.

The eastern part of southern Italy sadly lacked water, while the western part had far more than it needed. The River Sele was selected as that which could best be spared. It rises 124 miles from Bari, and the whole range of the lofty Apennines are in between. It was necessary to bore sixty miles of tunnel, mostly through granite; to build between four and five miles of aqueducts and to install between 47 and 48 miles of metallic double siphons. The main aqueduct is 132 miles long, and from it branch off 1,000 miles of canals that distribute to the villages of Apulia the 120,000,000 gallons of water that are deflected every day from the western to the eastern shores of the country.

More than 150 reservoirs, most of them carved out of solid rock, store up more than five million cubic feet of water at intervals along the aqueduct to provide against accidents that may make repairs necessary. And seventeen towns situated at points higher than the aqueduct receive the water by means of elevators.

PURSUED BY INDIANS.

Escaping from warlike Indians in a motor car is the experience related by Louis R. Brand, who passed through Hutchinson, Kan., en route to Detroit by automobile.

Brand, his wife and two boys, aged 3 and 7, escaped with their lives from Sonora, old Mexico, after a thrilling chase.

Mr. Brand has mining interests in the country where the Yaqui Indians are on the warpath. Although his presence was needed at the mine, his interest in the lives of his wife and children was greater. To have remained looked like sure death. Mr. Brand was prevailed upon to make a dash for safety in his motor car. The country he would be forced to drive for, California, was infested with Indians.

One hundred and fifty miles stretched from the mine to the border over much seldom used, through deep sand and across malapai washes. Accident to the car would have been fatal to the party, for the Indians would not have allowed them to escape. Only once were they attacked. That was in crossing a long stretch of sandy desert about fifty miles from the mine.

A small group of Yaquis approaching from a side road saw the car coming and then began a race to see who would reach the crossroads first. The Indians had only a little way to go and the motorist more than a mile, but the car responded nobly to the demand and crossed the distance in little more than a minute.

One of the Indians tried a long-range shot with his rifle, but the bullet whistled harmlessly over the heads of the party. It was a thrilling ride, with ruts and chicanes often disregarded and all speed possible made.

THE NINE WONDERS

— OR —

THE ROUGH RIDERS OF THE DIAMOND FIELDS

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XVII (continued)

"What is it?" Teddy asked.

"I have learned that there are three men in the home team here who are in the habit of making trouble in pretty nearly every game they play. Last season they came near killing the umpire in a game at Omaha, and to-morrow I fear that when they find themselves getting the worst of it they will become very ugly."

"Well, what if they do?" Teddy asked.

"Well, I don't want any trouble," continued Parry, "for they are a rough set of fellows, who think nothing of getting into a rough-and-tumble fight under the slightest provocation. Had I known what I have found out since arriving here I would not have accepted the challenge. I want you boys to keep perfectly cool, and take no offense at anything they say or do."

"Oh, well, now," said Robinson, "they can say what they please and it will be all right, but if they strike one of our nine we will thrash them until they feel as peaceful as Quakers."

"Oh, that won't do, boys," protested Parry, "for you know that little affair in Cincinnati, in which you were entirely blameless, has been used to your disadvantage all over the country, and if you get into another one it will be worse still, for it will confirm the first impression that went out from Cincinnati the next day after the game there."

"We'll try to keep cool, Parry, and I guess we can until they strike us—and if they do, we'll throw the whole Adirondack Mountains right on top of them. But we'll make sure that they are entirely in the wrong before we do so."

Parton was worried, and called on the umpire that had been selected by the powers of the baseball ground, and had a talk with him about it.

"Oh, the stockyard boys are all right," said the umpire. "They are all honest, hard-working fellows, who play a good game and do a great deal of talking, contrary to the rules, but I don't think there is any danger of their kicking against any decision that I may make."

"Have you ever umpired a game for them?" Parton asked.

"Oh, yes, several of them, and they always won by good playing."

"But how can they stand a defeat?" Parton asked.

"Oh, if you beat them they'll take it good-naturedly, for they are all grown men, while your team is made up of boys."

"Well, all right," said Parton. "I hope there'll be a strong police force on the ground."

"There'll be enough officers there to keep order," and the confidence of the umpire reassured Parton, who returned to the hotel in a much better frame of mind.

The next day when the boys entered the inclosure they found an enormous crowd present, who had evidently come out to have a good time. They were very demonstrative and liberal in their welcome to the young Rough Riders.

According to the custom of baseball games, the visiting team was the first at the bat. They found the pitcher for the home team very well up in all the latest curves, and well deserved the reputation he had won.

But the boys batted him all over the field. They knocked out three two-baggers in the first inning and one three-bagger, but succeeded in making only two runs.

They retired to the field, followed by a good deal of applause, and the Stockyard Nine went to the bat full of pluck and confidence.

Tom Knatt, when he entered the box, decided to give them a lesson in pitching that would have the effect of undermining their confidence in themselves.

The first man at the bat, when he saw the ball coming at him fluttering like a butterfly, struck at it with tremendous force and missed.

"One strike!" called the umpire.

The next ball was simply a repetition of the first, and the umpire sung out:

"Two strikes!"

When the third one was sent, the umpire's voice was again heard calling out:

"Three strikes!"

The batsman threw down the willow and another took it up, who was doomed to listen to the same sounds just behind him:

"One strike!"

"Two strikes!"

"Three strikes!"

The batsman threw down the willow with a force commensurate with the disgust that moved him.

The third man to take it up met the same fate, and the nine retired to the field without having once touched the ball.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TROUBLE ON THE GROUNDS.

When the Rough Riders went to the bat a great deal of quiet, earnest talk passed from one to the other of the

home team as they retired to the field. The comments heard from all sides in the crowd nettled some of them. There were small boys present who taunted them.

"They can't hit anything but a steer!" called out a shrill voice in the crowd, the owner of which was standing against the ropes.

"They couldn't hit a steer!" yelled another, "because they are rattled. That pitcher is a daisy—and they don't know daisies!"

The crowd laughed good-naturedly, but chafed the home team unmercifully.

When Dick Crenshaw took up the bat at the beginning of the third inning he knocked the ball skyward, and was caught out.

"Ah!" roared the crowd, and the home nine gave a great shout.

Ed McCoy took up the bat and smashed out a two-bagger to center field. Jack Tilman followed with a two-bagger that sent him home, while he himself rested at second.

Zeb Martin knocked a hot grounder to right field that landed him at first and Jack at third. Harry Moore knocked a high ball away out to right field, where the fielder muffed it. Jack dashed across the home plate, while Zeb got around to third. Harry dashed for second, which he reached by a tremendous slide just as the ball was pressed on his shoulder.

"Judgment!" called the home team captain.

"Safe," replied the umpire.

"How in thunder do you make that out?" called the center fielder, turning and looking at the umpire, who had not moved out of his tracks. "I touched him with the ball before he touched the plate."

"I beg your pardon," said Harry as he rose to his feet, "I was on the plate when I felt the ball touch me."

"Now you dry up, young man," said the center fielder; "you have nothing to say about it."

"All right," laughed Harry, who remembered what Parry had said to him the night before. "It's all right if the umpire will let you decide it."

"Play ball," called out the umpire.

"Not on your life!" roared the center fielder; he's out."

"See here, now," said the umpire; "play ball or I'll decide the game in favor of the visiting team. I am the sole judge of the play, and will not tolerate any kicking whatever."

The home team was very much surprised, as well as angered, at the firmness of the umpire, but they were obliged to submit.

Jimmie Elliot took up the bat and had one strike called on him, but the next one he smashed way out to right field and Harry dashed for third.

When he reached it he found Jimmie sprinting to second, and discovered that the fielder was sending the ball to stop him there. Seeing the mistake he dashed for the home plate, whilst the entire nine angrily yelled to the fielder to send the ball there.

The man who caught it, instead of stopping Jimmie, hurled it with all his force to the home plate.

Of course the delay was fatal, and Harry dashed over the plate, followed by a wild cheer from the crowd. Jimmie

also took advantage of the mistake and dashed for third. The ball was sent to third, and the baseman muffed it. In his effort to recover it he stumbled over Jimmie, landing on his head and going over into a complete somersault amid screams of laughter. Jimmie sprang to his feet and dashed for home. He got there on a slide just as the ball reached him, and again judgment was called.

"Safe!" yelled the umpire.

But the angry stockyard men protested that Jimmie was put out at third base, that he had upset the baseman who fell on top of him with the ball.

"Nonsense," said the umpire; "he muffed the ball, and it didn't touch the baserunner, and in trying to pick it up the baseman fell over him."

Again an angry dispute ensued, and the umpire firmly called:

"Play ball."

But the home team was in an angry mood. The entire nine gathered around their captain to back him against the umpire.

"Mr. Umpire," called out Teddy Robinson, "as captain of the visiting team we relinquish our claim to Elliot's run."

"All right," said the umpire, "that is voluntary on your part, but I still declare him safe."

"Oh, stick to it," said the home team captain, "if you want to, but it don't go." Whereat the umpire turned quickly and said: "See here, Harding, I want you to understand now that the next man who kicks on any decision I make in this game will be put off the field. I am here to umpire the game; you are here simply to play it. Now, you attend to your business and I will attend to mine."

"Oh, that's all right," retorted the other, as he went to the field.

"So it is," returned the umpire, "and I want you to remember it."

Teddy Robinson then took up the bat and smashed a ball to right field, on which he got to first base. Knatt sent him to second, and himself rested at first. Patten smashed the ball to center field, and Teddy sprinted for third, where he made a flying leap over the baseman who was on the line and stooping to catch the ball. As he did so his foot brushed the baseman's cap from his head. The baseman wheeled and struck him a hard blow with the ball, and called for judgment.

The umpire declared him out.

The visiting team then retired to the field, and the home team went to the plate again.

Tom Knatt quietly waited in the box until he saw that the batsman was ready, when he sent one of the fluttering balls at him.

The batsman missed it.

"One strike!" called the umpire.

The next ball was even more puzzling to the batsman than the other. He fanned the air viciously, but the ball nestled in the hands of the catcher.

"Two strikes!" called the umpire.

The third delivery was but a repetition of the other two.

(To be continued)

TIMELY TOPICS

Edith Channel, a young woman of Kansas City, Mo., reached San Francisco Aug. 1, completing a long journey afoot begun in the Missouri city Feb. 2. According to the physician in charge of the tuberculosis booth in the Exposition Palace of Education at the Panama-Pacific Exposition, who made a thorough examination, Miss Channel, who left her home in the shadow of the great white plague, is in perfect health.

T. S. Edmunds, of Monroe, Ga., reports that he has growing in his garden the "healing squash." He for a long time doubted that there ever grew such a vegetable. Now, having made the test, he is satisfied that such a thing is possible. He has cut from the ends of the product a sufficiency for a meal or two and healing was immediate, and the vegetable is yet going forth to give a new supply as the occasion may demand.

Thomas Langdon, a Rockport, Ind., citizen, bought several pigs recently. Much to his surprise he found that he had some trained animals on his hands, for whenever the 12 o'clock or 6 o'clock whistles blew the pigs made a frantic rush for the feed trough, where they stood and squealed until fed. Making inquiry, he learned that they had been formerly kept near the flour mill and fed by one of the employees as soon as the whistles blew.

Put-in-Bay residents are making arrangements for the celebration of the one hundred and second anniversary of the battle of Lake Erie on Sept. 10 of this year. To them the main shaft of the Perry Memorial, on the southeastern shore of Put-in-Bay Island, Ohio, is one of the wonders of the world. The only thing they don't like about it is the charge of twenty-five cents exacted for the trip by elevator to the dome. The shaft is an important landmark to the navigators of the Great Lakes.

South Africa is coming into the limelight as a meat-exporting district, according to a commerce report. Shipments have been made to England since May, the total to recent date being 354 quarters of beef. All of this meat came from Natal, with the exception of about 1,500 quarters from Cape Town. Although it was of poor quality, on the whole, it brought 13 or 15 cents a pound at Smithfield market, London. Exported under favorable conditions, an experimental consignment of 24 quarters of meat from the Government School of Agriculture at Cedara was sold in England at 17 cents a pound for hindquarters and 15 cents a pound for fores.

The Bureau of Plant Industry reports that its agricultural explorer, Mr. F. N. Meyer, who already had so many remarkable "finds" to his credit, has recently sent in an unusually interesting collection of new fruits from the Tibetan border of China. These include the Tangutian almond, the Potanin peach, and a notable series of wild

forms of the ordinary cultivated peach. Mr. Meyer's latest expedition succeeded in reaching Lanchowfu, when further progress was prevented by the desertion of the interpreter. Recent collections have largely augmented the Agricultural Department's stock of jujubes and persimmons from western China.

Permanent damage to the heart does not result from rowing under the present college system, according to results shown by an examination of oarsmen at Harvard conducted by Dr. Roger J. Lee, professor of hygiene. In an article in the Harvard Alumni Bulletin, Prof. Lee says: "No evidence has been discovered in the study of this group of 42 cases that would tend to show that the present system of intercollegiate rowing, with a four-mile race and a long preliminary training period, causes any permanent damage to the heart, particularly, as has been the case at Harvard, where only organically sound students are permitted to participate and are kept under medical supervision. Furthermore, rowing persisted in by college oarsmen for an average of over five years after graduation, fails to show that the size of the heart is affected."

One of the most serious situations which invariably faces an army in the field is the lack of proper bathing facilities for the men. Until very recently this has been particularly true in nearly all the war camps of Europe. Of late, however, a step has been taken by the Germans which apparently will go far in bettering the unsanitary conditions which have heretofore prevailed. This has come in the construction of bathhouse trains which were sent into districts occupied by the Germans in northern France. These trains consist of an engine and tender, a large tank car carrying water and a number of cars fitted with shower baths, together with others provided with tubs and lockers, as well as dressing-rooms for the officers. Sufficient water can be carried in one of these tanks, which is similar to those used in transporting oil, for about 1,000 persons.

Another case of mysterious disappearance has been solved by the finding of Elias McDaniel, heir to an estate in Danville, Ind., who dropped out of existence more than twenty-five years ago, so far as this community knew. McDaniel was located in the West by Levi Brown, administrator of the McDaniel estate, after a long search. The man had turned hermit and trapper and was found living in a lonesome cabin in a forest near Portland, Ore. When told that his father and mother were both dead and that he was heir to about \$7,000 worth of property, he evinced no feeling whatever, but flatly refused to return and take possession. He was finally persuaded to go into town and sign papers giving Mr. Brown authority to sell the property and send him the proceeds. No one has ever been able to fathom the cause of the estrangement between father and son.

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GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

There are about 500 wild buffaloes in the Province of Alberta, Canada, and these are said to be the only wild herds left on the continent out of the vast hordes which once roamed the prairies and the foothills. Most of the 500 range in northern Alberta, and the rest in the McKenzie district. Protection is given to the buffalo by the Northwest Mounted Police.

The United States is, by far, the greatest paper-producing country in the world. It is estimated that the present annual output of the American paper mills is worth \$300,000,000. The United States is, however, a comparatively small exporter of paper, the manufacturers in the past having had about all they could do to supply the home demand. Paper exports have been increasing to England and Argentina.

Gus Brown, of Dubuque, Iowa, displayed a shoe shine the other day that cost him \$3,600, and it was not so spectacular as one might imagine. Brown gave the porter in a hotel in Los Angeles, Cal., the shoes to be sent to the bootblack and when they came back Mrs. Brown told her husband that she had tucked \$3,600 worth of jewelry in one shoe for safekeeping. The bootblack denied seeing the valuables and the porter pleaded ignorance. The police have been unable to recover the property. Meanwhile the shine has worn off.

Capt. B. R. King, superintendent of the Fort Meade waterworks, was in Wauchula, Fla., recently and showed a picture of the only working alligator in Florida. Some time ago one of the sewers of Fort Meade became clogged up. It was 400 feet from manhole to manhole, and the sewer was twenty feet below the surface and in quicksand. It looked as though the city was in for an expensive job. The captain conceived the idea of getting an alligator, tying a line to him and letting him work his way through the sewer. At first an 18-inch alligator was tried. He went nearly 200 feet and turned back. Then a four-foot gator was obtained, and he worked his way from manhole to manhole, carrying the line with him, after which the cleaning of the sewer was a simple matter.

Military observers who have been watching the progress of the war in Russia are convinced that the German troops will not be stopped in Russia until the entire first line of the Russian army is either captured or broken up in such a manner that it cannot take the offensive within a year. Assuming that the Russian situation is cleaned up, these observers believe that the combined German and Austrian forces will make a drive into Italy, seeking not only to crush the Italian army, but to open the way for invasion of France across the border of Italy. It is argued that the losses in invading France through Italy will be less than in a drive through the entrenched lines on the western frontier of Germany. With this situation the Austrian and German forces would be attacking the Allies in France from two sides. This assumes that they no longer feared any serious offensive from Russia until the issue had been forced in France.

GRINS AND CHUCKLES

Harry—You and Tom appear to be the best of friends.
Dick—Why shouldn't we be? We never say what we think of each other.

Mr. Dumhead—Nelson was coming to call, but I told him you would be engaged this evening— Miss Ole-made, rapturously—Oh, William!

The Idiot—But you don't know wherein lies the difference between a good cook and a poor printer's devil? The Victim—Unburden your soul. The Idiot—One forms the pie and the other-pies the form.

"So Ambitious has achieved fame, has he?" asked the philosopher. "He has," replied the cheerful chap. "Brilliant things said by other men are now credited to him."

Mrs. Highblower—Elsie, you never speak outside of the quarrels between your papa and myself, do you? Elsie—Oh, no, mamma. But when you are pleasant to each other I always mention it.

Blobbs—Newlywed's wife is a cooking-school girl, and she has been feeding him on angel food. Slobbs—What effect has it had on him? Blobbs—Well, I think he has rather given up the idea of ever becoming an angel.

"The new railroad has been a great blessing to us," says a rural exchange. "In less than six weeks we got enough damages out of it to build a town hall and grade the cemetery. A few more enterprises of this kind, and our town will rise to heights undreamed of in the history of new settlements."

"Do you think it is polite," said the foolish stranger in Crimson Gulch, "for a man to sit in his shirt-sleeves and play cards all day?" "Yes, sir," answered Three-Finger Sam; "and maybe it'll be for your own good to remind you that the fewer sleeves a man has on when he plays cards around here the less liable he is to fall under suspicion."

HUNTING ALLIGATORS.

By Col. Ralph Fenton

"I think," said Bill, my guide, "we had better make an early start, as it's ten miles to the pool where the alligators are the biggest and the thickest."

"All right," said I, "I'll be ready as soon as you are."

It was my first adventure of the kind, and I was very much excited, and looked forward to the hunt with considerable pleasure.

"I reckon you won't be so ambitious the second trip, young man," said Bill, who was an old hunter. "One taste of the mosquitoes and other pesky things'll be enough for you, I'll warrant."

"I'll run the risk of a stinging," I retorted, "if you will just show me the alligator." I was not a crack shot like Bill, who could snuff a candle at a hundred feet, but I thought I could put a bullet through the eye of an alligator if it was not too far away.

The Charco del Demonio, or the Demon's Pool, is close to the Ulua, the principal river of Honduras. Nothing could be lovelier to the eye, weary with the blinding glare of the sun, than the deep, rich green of the trees along the bank, their interlaced branches affording us a cool and shady resting-place below.

So we immediately began our preparations for camping. Every tree and shrub seemed full of life, and the air was fairly thick with mosquitoes and other "pesky things," the like of which I have never dreamed, and I soon found out what it was to camp in a tropical forest.

We had collected wood for our fire, and now set out after game for our supper. By our joint exertions we soon sat down to a meal we thought excellent of roast porcupine and a species of grouse. We were very tired after the day's tramp, and turned in early to be fresh for the morning hunt. Bill was soon fast asleep; but nothing like slumber came to me, for there were howls and groans, and piping and cawing, shrieking and bellowing, and it appeared as if an army of magpies and crickets and other voluble creatures were striving their best to outdo one another in horrible discord.

Toward morning I was so dead beat that I fell into a doze, from which I was awakened by the crackling of the leaves. I fancied that some wild animal must be near, and was on my feet instantly, gun in hand. Our fire having gone out, I was in the darkness, and for a moment I dared not move or speak, but as my eyes became accustomed to the gloom, I saw something moving toward the sleeping Bill. Peering cautiously through the bushes, I saw the hideous snout of an alligator and I aimed right at his eye, but, before I could pull the trigger, Bill was on his feet, and, quicker than it takes to tell this, he popped the brute square in the eye.

After this alarming episode of course I felt no inclination to sleep, so, stirring the fire into a blaze, I sat down waiting for the dawn. The first ray of sun found us in our boat pulling up the river, and by seven o'clock we reached the entrance to the Demon's Pool.

Soon Bill's practised eye saw an alligator. He flung it a piece of meat, and then put a bullet through its nearest

eye, taking care to keep the boat out of reach of the deadly tail. When the beast's convulsions had ceased and he floated quietly on the surface we towed him to the bank. In this way we landed five good-sized alligators in the course of the forenoon.

Before starting for camp I wanted to take a swim, but was afraid of the alligators. The sun was at its meridian, and the heat was intense. Bill said he knew of a small lake or basin of water where we could be safe, as it was protected by a ledge of rocks that separated it from the river.

I was enjoying the water immensely, it was so refreshing, and was about to venture out in the deeper water, when, to my intense horror, I heard Bill cry loudly: "Alligator, alligator!" and I saw making right toward him on the other side of the lake the father of all alligators. I shouted to him to make for the shore. For a moment he seemed undecided what to do, then, realizing his position, he struck out with a vim, but the monster was now in fearful proximity to him. I held my breath and watched him, for it was a race for life. Paralyzed with terror, I saw Bill make a quick turn and dive. The brute lashed his tail furiously, and from the commotion in the water I thought it was all up with poor Bill, but in another minute, to my surprise, Bill was on the shore in safety.

It was by Bill's dexterous movement in diving that he succeeded in so puzzling the alligator and saved his life.

Being so occupied with Bill's terrible danger, I had not thought of myself, so you may realize my situation when, just as soon as the brute spied me, he made rapidly in my direction. I was at least twenty feet from the ledge, my only refuge, and my sole chance was to get there in time to climb out of my pursuer's reach. It was true the danger was not so imminent as that of Bill, but my position was nevertheless one of extreme peril, and one from which I could see no means of escape. Some horrible instinct seemed to enable the alligator to scent me, for a few minutes after Bill reached the shore not a ripple was on the water.

I reached the rock, but in getting up slipped, and was nearly precipitated into the very jaws of the alligator, when I had managed to scramble up again, how I never knew afterward, for it was almost perpendicular, and fortunately so smooth the brute could not climb it, being very sluggish when out of water. I could not keep my eyes off my horrible companion, who continued to float almost motionless at the surface of the water. His small eyes, placid yet so ferocious, seemed to follow my every movement. There it lay, as if dead, yet never taking its glance from its prey.

I gave up all hope, as far as anything I could do for myself was concerned. So I thought of my mother's prayer, and waited heaven's will. My strained muscles were giving way, and I felt I could not hold on much longer to the slippery rock, and, looking, saw Bill in the boat within twenty feet of the alligator. He had thrown it a piece of meat, and as the animal turned and closed its jaw on the morsel Bill drew a bead and sent a bullet through its brain, and as soon as its struggles were over I was hauled into the boat.

The monster measured fully eighteen feet, of which the tail was five and a half feet. The circumference, in the

thickest part, was over four feet, and the hinder legs, with thigh and paw, two feet long. The paws, from the joint to the point of the longest claws, were about nine inches in length, having four toes, united by thick membrane, three of which were armed with claws. The upper jaw was a fixed part of the skull and the lower jaw movable, as in all animals, and when they yawned to their greatest extent the opening between them was a full fifteen inches, sufficient to receive the body of man or beast.

I agreed with Bill that I was not anxious for another alligator hunt, but Bill was very proud of having killed the largest alligator he had ever seen. I have still two of the monster's teeth that I have kept as souvenirs of this adventure.

A SNAKE-EATER.

In a dilapidated rookery on Third street stood a dilapidated man. He was a snake man. Over his shoulder was a red velvet Don Caesar de Bazan cape, fantastically trimmed with faded and tawdry gilt. Blue calico breeches striped with red bunting, and a wig of hemp that reached to his waist, completed his attire. He called it his den. In three boxes covered with window glass—the boxes were marked soda crackers and castor oil—lay coiled some thirty or forty of the slimy monsters.

"These are my pets," said the old man. "Snakes has sense. Now watch," and drawing aside one of the lids he took out a huge rattlesnake that he called "Pete." You ought to see him handle Pete. He said: "Petey, come here, Petey," and he took the dirty, slimy snake in his hands, coiled him around his neck, then stuck his head in his mouth, called him by his name and said:

"Kiss me, Pete!" and the slimy monster crawled up his body, wound his coils around his neck, and ran his venomous lips and darting fangs along the snake man's mouth. The fangs ran out two inches. "Are you not afraid he'll poison you?" "Oh, no! Snakes has sense, and old Pete knows me as an old friend. Well," said the old fellow with a droll leer of his eyes and a knowing shake of his head, "snakes is a business. When I was only five years old my parents found me eating my bread and butter with a pair of snakes. I kinder took to 'em. They were my playmates. I never played with other children. I suppose they charmed me. When I was only nine years of age Barnum took me, and I was with his show for a number of years. One day his manager got mad at me, and in a drunken fit threw one of the rattlesnakes at me. He bit me in the eye, but I cured it with Indian remedies."

"How do you catch a snake?"

"I'll show you," and he laid a vicious-looking copper-head some three feet long on the floor. "Now, you must be gentle with snakes. If I go at him quick he'll bite sure," and, advancing with a swift motion towards the reptile, it sprang up, head erect, and darted out a pair of venomous-looking fangs at his hand.

"He's cross."

"Oh, no, it's only the way you come at 'em. Now see," and, placing his hand gently on the floor, near his head, and gradually moving it under it, the animal, as soon as he felt the warm hand, crawled into it and seemed as docile as a pet lamb. "There," said the snake man, with an air

of triumph, "that's the way to catch a snake. Be gentle with 'em, and don't move quick."

No sooner was the snake fairly in his hand than he carried him to his head, and he coiled about and in his hair as though he was thoroughly at home.

"I understand that you eat snakes—in that a fact?"

"Well, I should say so. I had rather eat a basin of rattlesnake, that is, if they had not bitten themselves, than the plumpest spring chicken you ever saw."

"How do you cook them?"

"There is only one way, and that is to broil them over coals. I never could succeed in stewing them; they then become tasteless."

At this juncture a squabby woman, with spectacles, cold, blue eyes and humpty-dumpty figure, who had been sitting just outside the door smoking a clay pipe and reading "Beecher's Life of Christ," came in and said: "Oh, John, you hush up; I'll show the gentleman the critters." And the old lady laid Beecher's book on a vacant snake-box, crammed her specs over her head, and, reaching her long, lank fingers into the box, pulled out a handful of wriggling reptiles. "Here is a blowing adder," and he ran out one inch and a half of spiteful tongue. "This is the black asp, black on top of body and light blue beneath; they blow their poison. These are a pair of copper moccasins, and these are blacksnakes, or some calls 'em coach-whips." She flung them all around her neck, and they climbed into her hair, over her comb, and mingled up together, twining and squirming and wriggling in all conceivable ways.

"How do you feed them, and what do they eat?"

"A snake loves milk (sweet milk), frogs, toads, sometimes a piece of raw meat; and I give them fresh water three times a day. In winter they have to be kept in a warm room. When they are well fed and fat they'll shed their skin three or four times a year. If they are hungry and half-starved they'll only shed once a year. When they go into the shedding process they become blind," and, reaching into one of the boxes, she dragged out an old rattlesnake, and said: "He's a-shedding; look at his eyes."

Sure enough, he looked blind. The eyes had a dim, glassy look; and we noticed that they never blinked as we passed our hand rapidly in front of them.

"He will be blind for from ten to eighteen days. Then he'll shed his skin and come out all right."

"Are snakes a paying business?"

"Well, no," said the old man. "I can make a decent living, and that's all. Fact is, city folks don't like snakes, but in the country I always do well. When I traveled with Barnum, I was called 'Wonena, the Indian snake charmer,' but I am a half-breed. My mother was Dutch; my father was a Spaniard. During the war I was not exactly a soldier, but I carried the flag on board the Cumberland, and when the Merrimac ran her down a shell struck my arm, and I had to have it amputated. Mortification ensued, and the stump had to be taken out at the socket, so I have been one-armed ever since. I think I'll have to get a tent and go down on the river bank, for rent is so high. Who, stranger, I pay \$8 a month for this room. I tell you it's enough to bankrupt a Rothschild, let alone a snake man."

NEWS OF THE DAY

While motoring on the reservation across the river, at Mobridge, S. Dak., some Mobridge men sighted a full-grown coyote. They returned to town for ammunition and succeeded in running down and shooting the coyote. In the early days the only thing that could outrun a coyote was a jackrabbit.

Miss Dorothy Southard, society girl and daughter of Frank E. Southard, president of the Toledo Metal Wheel and Tool Company, while visiting friends in the East some time ago, got as a remembrance a picture which she had found in the attic and for which she expressed admiration. She was told the picture had been in the family 300 years. Upon its arrival it was sent to an art shop to have its frame regilded. Then it was learned the canvas was either a Van Dyke or Rubens and was worth probably \$50,000. The picture, according to Miss Southard, was brought from England in 1600.

A recent number of a Bavarian trade organ, *Handel und Industrie*, states that the Krupp works have just turned out a steel safe that will put all burglars to shame. It is reported that this famous Essen firm has succeeded in making a steel of such resistibility that it withstands the methods of attack and the tools at present known to burglars. At a melting test, steel plates with a surface of 11.8 by 11.8 inches and a thickness of 1.57 inches were used, which, in the separate testings, were subjected for a different length of time to an oxyacetylene flame. At one of these tests a hole of 1.968 inches diameter and 1.377 inches depth was burned into the plate.

The first ruler of United Italy allowed his mustache to attain such a length that in his later years he would never eat anything at a public banquet. When taking food he was obliged to tie the ends of the mustache behind his head, and he would not appear in this undignified attitude in front of people not belonging to his circle of intimates. After a visit he paid to England, Harriet, Duchess of Sutherland, wrote: "Victor Emmanuel is the only Knight of the Garter I have ever seen who looks as if he would certainly have the best of it with the Dragon." So evidently he had acquired the wished-for look of ferocity.

Thirty years ago the prairies of Nemaha County, Kan., were populated with coveys of quail and flocks of prairie chickens. Professional hunters came from the river cities and killed them for market. These destroyers counted it a poor day's work of 200 birds. These were drawn when killed and sold daily. On the city markets the chickens brought \$2 a dozen and the quail \$1. The chickens have been exterminated from the county, and a farmer who possesses a covey of quail these days considers them so valuable as insect destroyers that he prosecutes hunters who even stare the birds. In those days the quail in the

month of September gathered in droves and migrated. They were very tame and quiet when in numbers. They walked or ran as a rule, so that the weakest were not lost. Bird-lovers in those days tried to protect the young, but the professional hunters slaughtered them even with clubs.

The most distinguished company of "white wings" that ever repaired local roads was a company of indignant and determined women, representing the first families of Potter's county seat, Coudersport, Pa., who, enraged at neglect of the borough authorities to put the residential section of East street in appropriate shape for Chautauqua week, turned out in silks, laces and diamonds galore and flashed hoe, shovel, spade, rake and wheelbarrow, as well as gravel along the line till their fair and intelligent faces glowed with exercise and indignation over the way their fine homes were disfigured by mudholes and weeds of neglected streets. "Our patience has been exhausted in appeals to city fathers," declared one silk-petticoated worker, "and we won't stand for it any longer."

Consul George N. West, Kobe, Japan, has forwarded to the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce an extract from the Japan Chronicle which reads as follows:

"In view of the paralyzing effect on Japanese industry of the stoppage of imports of chemicals by the war, the Home Department has been making chemicals on an elaborate scale at the Government hygienic laboratories in Tokio and Osaka; with satisfactory results, it is now announced. Chemicals of as good a quality as those imported, it has thus far been proved by experiment, can be manufactured in Japan, including hydrochloric acid, salicylic, carbolic and sulphuric acids, morphine, atropine, bromine and bismuth. The preparation of these chemicals is to be undertaken privately, with the help of a State subvention, on the lines recommended by the Government laboratories."

The "potato bread" made of rye flower and potatoes, and highly recommended by the German authorities as a substitute for wheat bread, does not appeal to the New York Medical Journal, which says that the numerous complaints attending its use indicate that this makeshift fare is not achieving the results which have been claimed for it. The Journal, our medical contemporary, points out "that the constant consumption of this bread is attended by many untoward symptoms. Chief among these are diarrhea, hyperacidity, flatulence, and constipation. Because of its unpalatability the German war bread is often not masticated enough, and to this are probably due a great many of the symptoms. Flatulence also is probably due to the swallowing of large, tough lumps of bread. These dietetic discomforts are, as a rule, amenable to treatment, in fact, thorough mastication of the bread will often relieve them entirely. In the hyperacidity small doses of sodium bicarbonate are effective. The flatulence yields to large doses of charcoal."

INTERESTING ARTICLES

FURS IN THE NORTHWEST.

Consul-General R. E. Mansfield, Vancouver, Canada, writes to the Department of Commerce that there is little prospect of any big fur sales being held in that city this season, and that the usual annual influx of fur buyers is noticeably absent.

He also says that, with an almost complete absence of demand from Europe, which is the chief market for furs, combined with a material decline in values of the higher-priced pelts, the lot of the fur dealer or trapper in the Canadian Northwest is not a highly remunerative one at present.

The supply of furs is very good, according to reports from the North, which may tend to force prices still lower. Many of the well-known fur traders in northern British Columbia and the Yukon are unable to pay their bills, because they have been unable to obtain anything like reasonable prices for their furs. It is anticipated, however, that there will be a demand for moderate-priced furs in the near future. Black furs will be much in demand in Europe and elsewhere because of the almost universal mourning. Other furs, like the white fox, musquash and lynx, will be dyed black to meet the demand.

NORWEGIAN MISER HAD OVER \$1,000 IN CASH.

Face downward in a heap between pieces of his crude home-made furniture, the body of Torgen O. Svendsen, aged seventy-four, a Norwegian miser, was found in his lonely house on Olalla Slough, Toledo, Ore., the other day by Junder Olson, a neighbor.

Dr. R. D. Burgess, county physician, and Sheriff Geer found the house locked and barred and the windows nailed with heavy spikes, making it necessary to break in a door.

In the bottom of Svendsen's trunk were two tobacco sacks containing \$1,000 in gold, on his person was a \$20 gold piece and some small change. He had ordered \$1 worth of cough medicine charged at a Toledo drug store, saying he had no money with which to pay for it.

His estate includes property worth more than \$1,000 and he has been known to have lent some money. It is said he also has property in Oregon City and in Salem. His friends estimate his wealth at \$15,000.

Little is known of Svendsen in Toledo except that he came from Gudbrandsdalen, Norway; that he lived for a long time at Horing, Ore., and that he has a sister, Mrs. Walker, whose husband is said to own a lumber yard at Clear Lake, S. Dak. Efforts are being made to reach his relatives.

LACK OF CHAUFFEURS IN RUSSIA.

Whatever may have been the causes of the withdrawal of the Russian armies from their strong positions in Galicia and Poland, there now remains no doubt that one of the strongest must have been the lack of chauffeurs capable of driving the American motor trucks. Advertisements

appearing in British and Canadian papers—yes, even in Detroit and Toledo papers—offer high wages to motor truck drivers "willing to go to Europe for not less than one year," as the advertisements in America and Canada state. Russia, of all the fighting nations, has been most handicapped by its lack of motor equipment, by its poor roads and its lack of chauffeurs. Hundreds of good drivers have fallen into the hands of the Germans, while the rest have to conquer great obstacles before they can render valuable services.

Less than ten per cent. of the entire Russian people are acquainted with motor traction, even in the most superficial manner. Not more than one per cent. are able even to handle a motor vehicle, much less repair it! And as for really good drivers for this hazardous and difficult work of keeping huge armies supplied—Russia has less than 5,000 men! The motor vehicle plays an important role in all the fields of battle, but when the history of the war comes to be written it will be found that its most spectacular and most clearly visible effect has been the paralysis of the Russian masses as compared with the flexibility of the well-equipped German-Austrian armies.

METHOD FOR CONCENTRATING GRAPE JUICE.

The American Department of Agriculture announces that there has been discovered at Washington a method for concentrating grape juice which promises to be the greatest discovery in the wine industry since Pasteur discovered the method of preserving light wines for the French Government.

This new method is altogether novel, as it consists not in boiling down the juice, but in freezing the juice. The ice is then cracked into small pieces and whirled in a centrifugal machine; by this means all the sugar and thick syrup is separated from the ice, which is almost pure water. By this means a gallon of the syrup is reduced to one quart.

A peculiar phenomenon incident to this process is the fact that the cream of tartar crystallizes out with the ice and makes the acidity of the juice much less than normal. This is particularly true of the Concord grape juice, which has a large percentage of tartar in it.

This new method of freezing the juices to concentrate them preserves in a wonderful degree the natural purple color of the juice and makes the drink very much more beautiful in its rich purple appearance and more sparkling.

When the concentrated juice is sterilized afterward by heating it keeps indefinitely as a thick syrup. It can be used at soda fountains, as flavorings for cookery and other dietary purposes. The Government hopes to exploit this latest discovery on a commercial basis this year, as it promises not only to give a fine quality of goods from the best grapes, but also the freezing method takes out the "rough" taste of many cheaper grades and gives a very fine article from the cheaper and coarser varieties.

THE BURNING CIGARETTE.

The greatest trick joke out. A perfect imitation of a smouldering cigarette with bright red fire. It fools the wisest. Send 10c. and we will mail it. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

DELUSION TRICK.

A magic little box in three parts that is very mystifying to those not in the trick. A coin placed on a piece of paper disappears by dropping a nickel ring around it from the magic box. Made of hard wood two inches in diameter. Price, 12c. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**

SEE-SAW PUZZLE.

The most absorbing puzzle seen for years. The kind you sit up half the night to do. The puzzle is to get both balls, one in each pocket. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c. by mail, postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

GLASS SCOPES.

This popular novelty is made of blown glass, and is to be filled with water. It then becomes a powerful magnifier suitable for enlarging any small object to an extraordinary size. Can be carried in the vest pocket. Price, 5c. each by mail postpaid. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**

GLASS PEN.—Patent glass pen, with nice dip, writes like any ordinary pen; each put up in wooden box. Price, 10c., postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

JAPANESE TWIRLER.

A wonderful imported paper novelty. By a simple manipulation of the wooden handles a number of beautiful figures can be produced. It takes on several combinations of magnificent colors. Price, 10c., postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

JAPANESE TRICK KNIFE.

You can show the knife and instantly draw it across your finger, apparently cutting deep into the flesh. The red blood appears on the blade of the knife, giving a startling effect to the spectators. The knife is removed and the finger is found in good condition. Quite an effective illusion. Price 10c. each by mail. **FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.**

GIANT SAW PUZZLE.

This puzzle contains twenty-one pieces of wood nicely finished; take them apart and put them together same as illustrated. Everybody would like to try it, as it is very fascinating. Price, by mail, postpaid, 25c. each. **C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.**

POCKET FLASH LIGHT SQUIRT.

Made of decorated enameled metal, representing an exact flash pocket lighter; by pressing a button instead of the bulb's eye, an electrically lighted up stream of water is ejected into the face of the spectator; an entirely new and amusing novelty. Price, 35c., postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

RAVELLING JOKE.

Yards upon yards of laughs. Don't miss it! Everyone falls for this one. It consists of a nice little bobbin around which is wound a spool of thread. You pin the bobbin under the lapel of your coat, and pull the end of the thread through your button-hole, then watch your friends try to pick the piece of thread off your coat. Enough said! Get one! Price, 12c. each, by mail. Postage stamps taken same as money. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

TRICK MATCHES.

Consist of a Swedish safety box, filled with matches, which will not light. Just the thing to cure the match borrowing habit. Price, 5c., postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

IMITATION GOLD TEETH.

Gold plated tooth, shape made so that it will fit any tooth. Price, 5c., postpaid. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**

MARBLE VASE.

A clever and puzzling effect, easy to do; the apparatus can be minutely examined. Effect: A marble can be made to pass from the hand into the closed vase, which a moment before was shown empty. This is a beautiful enameled turned wood vase. Price, 20c. **C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.**

THE MAGIC NAIL.

A common nail is given for examination, and then instantly shown pierced through the finger; and yet, when taken out, the finger is found to be perfectly uninjured, and the nail is again given to be examined. Nicely finished. Price, 10c. by mail, postpaid. **C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.**

NAME CARDS.

The newest fad in picture postals. They are beautifully lithographed in a variety of colors and have various names, such as Harry, Edith, etc., printed on the reverse side. Just the thing to mail to your friends. Price 6 for 10 cents, by mail, postpaid. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**

TRICK CUP.

Made of natural white wood turned, with two compartments; a round, black ball fits on those compartments; the other is a stationary ball. By a little practice you make the black ball vanish; a great trick novelty and immense seller. Price, 10c., postpaid. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**

SURPRISE PERFUME BOTTLE.

Those in the joke may freely smell the perfume in the bottle, but the uninitiated, on removing the cork will receive the contents in his hands. This is a simple and clever joke. Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid; 3 for 25c. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**

DEAD SHOT SQUIRT PISTOL.

If you shoot a man with this "gun" he will be too mad to accept the ancient excuse—"I didn't know it was loaded." It loads easily with a full charge of water, and taking aim, press the rubber bulb at the butt of the Pistol, when a small stream of water is squirted into his face. The best thing to do then is to pocket your gun and run. There are "loads of fun" in this wicked little joker, which looks like a real revolver, trigger, cock, chambers, barrel and all. Price only 7c.; 4 for 25c.; one dozen 60c. by mail postpaid. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**

SURPRISE KINEMATOGRAPH.

The greatest hit of the season! It consists of a small metal, nicked tube, with a lens eye view, which shows a pretty ballet girl in tights. Hand it to a friend, who will be delighted with the first picture; tell him to turn the screw in center of instrument to change the views, when a stream of water squirts into his face, much to his disgust. Anyone who has not seen this kinematograph in operation is sure to be caught every time. The instrument can be refilled with water in an instant, ready for the next customer. Price 25c. by mail, postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

Old Coins Wanted. \$1 to \$600 paid for hundreds of coins dated before 1895. Send 10c for our illustrated coin value book, and get posted. **Clarke & Co., Box 95, Le Roy, N. Y.**

EIGHT GAMES FOR 10c

Chess, Checkers, Fox and Geese, Nine Men Morris, Authors, Introduction Game, Spanish Prison, Dominoes; a whole year's amusement and the whole thing for only **10c**. Send 10 Cents today and get all eight Games! **DELPHOS NOVELTY CO., Box 233 - Delphos, Ohio.**

THE FIGHTING BOOSTERS.

A full blooded pair of fighting game cocks. These illiputian fighters have real feathers, yellow legs and fiery red combs, their movements when fighting are perfectly natural and lifelike, and the secret of their movements is known only to the operator, who can cause them to battle with each other as often and as long as desired. Independent of their fighting proclivities they make very pretty mantel ornaments. Price for the pair in a strong box, 10c.; 3 pairs for 25c. by mail, postpaid. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**

THE PRINCESS OF YOGI CARD TRICK.

Four cards are held in the form of a fan and a spectator is requested to mentally select one of the four. The cards are now shuffled and one is openly taken away and placed in his pocket. The performer remarks that he has taken the card mentally selected by the spectator. The three cards are now displayed and the selected card is found to be missing. Reaching in his pocket the performer removes and exhibits the chosen card. Price, 15c. **FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.**

Ayvad's Water-Wings

Learn to swim by one trial. Price 25 cents, Postpaid. These water-wings take up no more room than a pocket-handkerchief. They weigh 8 ounces and support from 50 to 250 pounds. With a pair anyone can learn to swim or float. For use, you have only to wet them, blow them up, and press together the two line marks under the mouthpiece. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

BUBBLER.

The greatest invention of the age. The box contains a blow-pipe of neatly enameled metal, and five tablets; also printed directions for playing numerous soap-bubble games, such as Floating Bubbles, Repeaters, Surprise Bubbles, Double Bubbles, The Boxers, Lung Tester, Supported Bubbles, Rolling Bubbles, Smoke Bubbles, Bouncing Bubbles, and many others. Ordinary bubble-blowing, with a pipe and soap water, are not in it with this scientific toy. It produces larger, more beautiful and stronger bubbles than you can get by the ordinary method. The games are intensely interesting, too. Price, 12c. by mail. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

EGGS OF PHARAOH'S SERPENTS.

A wonderful and startling novelty! "Pharaoh's Serpents" are produced from a small egg, no larger than a pea. Place one of them on a plate, touch fire to it with a common match, and instantly a large serpent, a yard or more in length, slowly uncovers itself from the burning egg. Each serpent assumes a different position. One will appear to be gliding over the ground, with head erect, as though spying danger; another will coil itself up, as if preparing for the fatal spring upon its victim while another will stretch out lazily, apparently enjoying its usual noonday nap. Immediately after the egg stops burning, the serpent hardens, and may afterward be kept as an amusing curiosity. They are put up in wooden boxes, twelve eggs in a box. Price, 8c., 3 boxes for 20c.; 1 dozen boxes for 60c., sent by mail, postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**



JUMPING CARD.—A pretty little trick, easy to perform. Effect: A selected card returned to the deck jumps high into the air at the performer's command. Pack is held in one hand. Price of apparatus, with enough cards to perform the trick, 10c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

DICE WATCHES

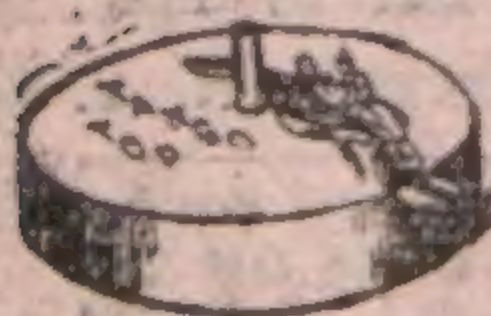


One of our best novelties. About the size of a watch, with a nickel case. A glass face encloses several ivory dice. On the rim of the case is a spring. By pressing it the dice are spun and scattered. The most intensely interesting games can be played with it.

It can be carried in the vest pocket. Formerly sold for \$1.00.

Price, 30c. each, by mail, postpaid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

TANGO TOP



A brand new novelty. More fun than a circus. You spin the post with your fingers, and the snake tangoes all around the top of the circular metal box, without falling off, although it is not fastened in any way.

When the post stops spinning, the snake drops from the lid. What is the secret of its great attraction to the post? The marvel of the age.

Price, 10c. each, by mail, postpaid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

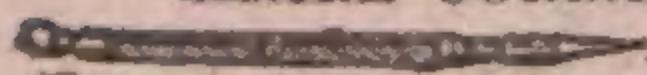
TRICK CIGARETTE BOX.



This one is a corker! Get a box right away, if you want to have a barrel of joy. Here's the secret: It looks like an ordinary red box of Turkish cigarettes. But it contains a trigger, under which you place a paper cap. Offer your friend a smoke and he raises the lid of the box. That explodes the cap, and if you are wise you will get out of sight with the box before he gets over thinking he was shot.

Price, 15c., postpaid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

SMALL COLLAPSIBLE PENCILS



The name is a joke. It looks small enough while it is hanging on your watch-charm, and it is very handsome in design, prettily nickeled, and very compact. But just hand the end of it to your friend, and it begins to untelescope until he imagines there is no end to it. Besides its ability to make fun, it is a good useful pencil, too.

Price, 15c. each, by mail, postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



KNITTER

Every boy who wants a whip-lash, pair of reins, or any other knitted article of similar kind should have a Knitter. Anybody can work it. The most beautiful designs can be made by using colored worsteds with this handy little object. It is handsomely lacquered, strongly made, and the wires are very durable.

Price, 10c. each, by mail, postpaid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

CRAWLING BUGS



These giant beetles are beautifully enameled in natural, brilliant colors. There is a roller underneath, actuated by hidden springs. When the roller is wound up the bug crawls about in the most lifelike manner. Try one on the maid if you want to enjoy yourself.

Price, 12c. each, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



THE MULTIPLYING CORKS.—A small round box is shown to be empty and one of the spectators is allowed to place three corks in it. The cover is put on and the box is handed to one of the spectators, who, upon removing the cover, finds six corks in the box. Three of the corks are now made to vanish as mysteriously as they came. Very deceptive.

Price, 15c. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

FOUR WEEKS (A LOUD BOOK).



Has the absolute and exact shape of a book in cloth. Upon the opening of the book, after having it set up according to directions furnished, a loud report similar to that of a pistol-shot will be heard, much to the amazement and surprise of the victim. Caps not mailable; can be bought at any toy store. Price, 65c. by mail, postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

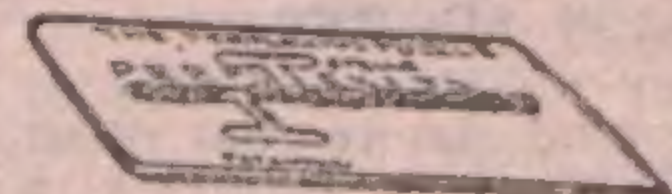
IMITATION CIGAR BUTT.



It is made of a composition, exactly resembling a lighted cigar. The white ashes at the end and the imitation of tobacco-leaf being perfect. You can carelessly place it on top of the tablecloth or any other expensive piece of furniture, and await the result. After they see the joke everybody will have a good laugh. Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid; 3 for 25c.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

PERPLEXITY PUZZLE



One of the most exasperating puzzles, calculated to make a saint swear. It is very hard to do this puzzle, but it can be done. It is made of highly nickeled metal. The trick is to so arrange the buttons in the slots that the letters spell the word "perplexity." Your chance of succeeding is very slim until you get the hang of the thing.

Price 15c. each, by mail, postpaid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

SLIDE THE PENCIL.



The pencil that keeps them guessing. Made of wood and lead just like an ordinary pencil, but when your victim starts to write with it—presto! the lead disappears. It is so constructed that the slightest pressure on the paper makes the lead slide into the wood. Very funny and a practical joke.

Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid; 3 for 25c. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

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